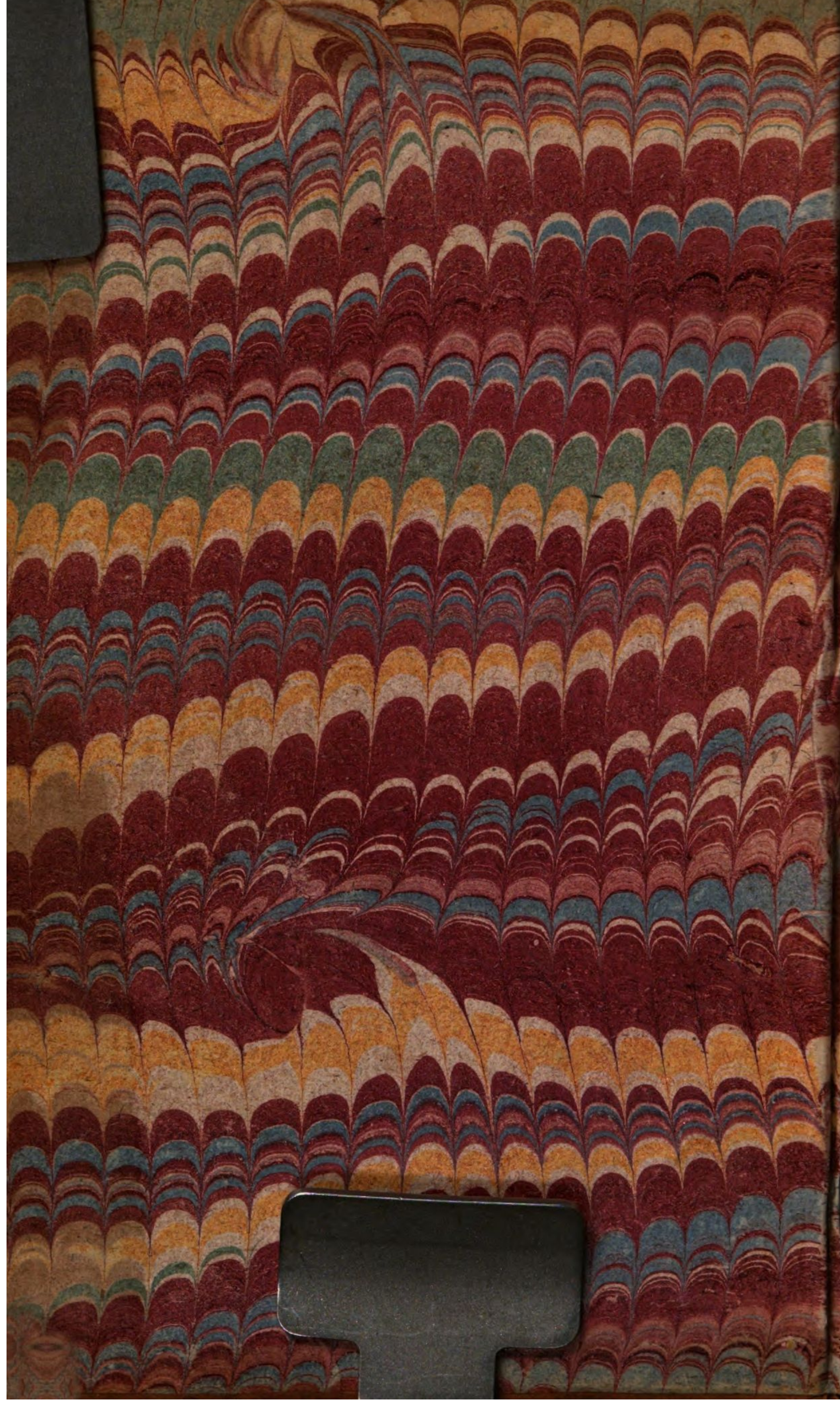
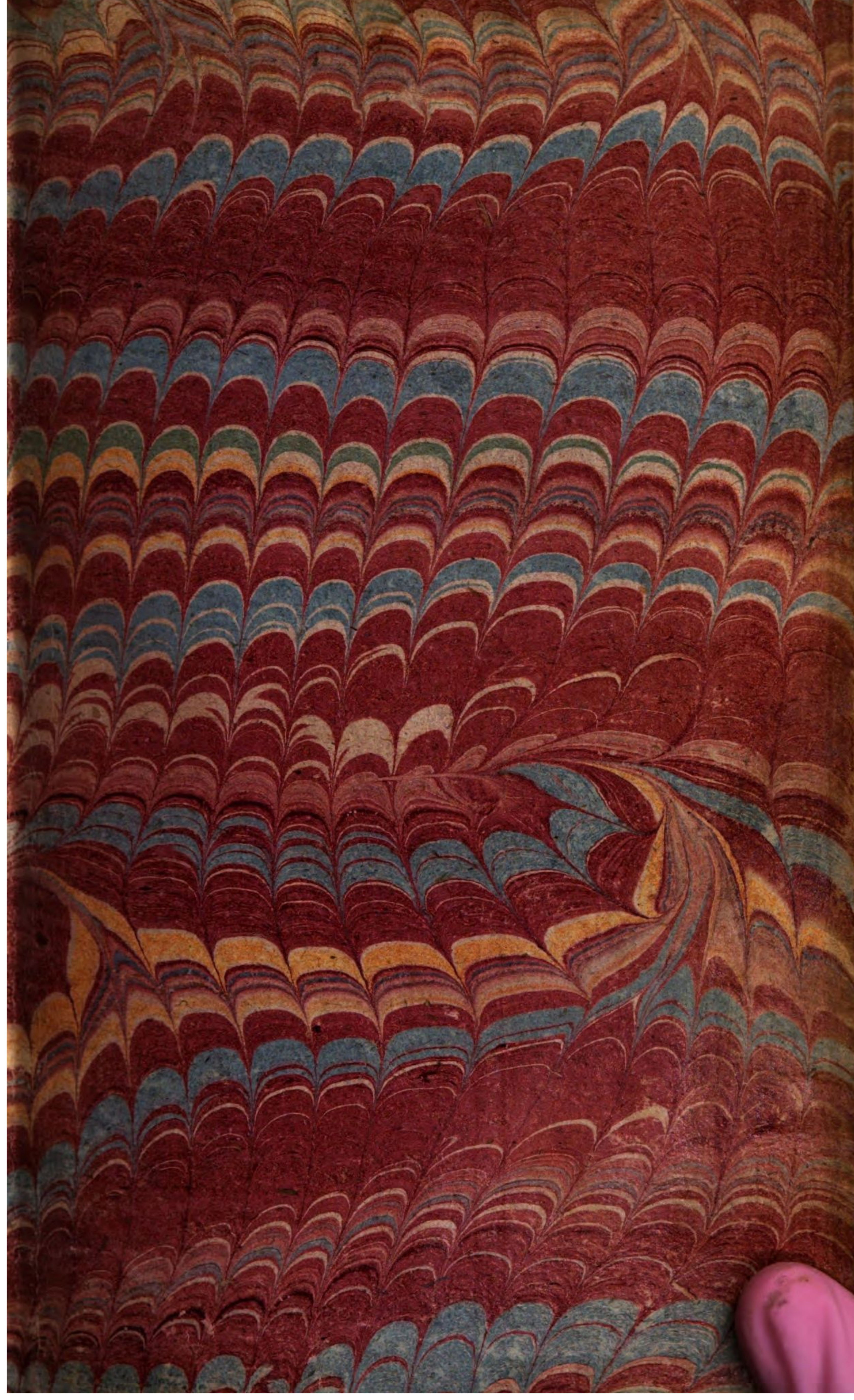








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Alexander Pope

VOLUME III

CONTAINING

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THE
WORKS
OF
Alexander Pope Esq.

VOLUME III.

CONTAINING HIS
MORAL ESSAYS.

LONDON,

Printed for A. MILLAR, and J. and R. TONSON,
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ESSAY on MAN, in FOUR EPISTLES.

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respect to the universe.* P. I

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AN
ESSAY
ON
SATIRE,

Occasioned by the Death of

Mr. POPE.

Inscribed to

Mr. WARBURTON.

By J. BROWN, A. M.

VOL. III.

A

CONSTITUTIONAL

ESSAYS

ON

STATISTICS

Occasioned by the Death of

MR. POPPER

Inscribed to

MR. WARRINGTON

BY J. BROWN, A.M.

Vol. III. A

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P A R T I.

FA T E gave the word; the cruel arrow sped;
 And P O P E lies number'd with the mighty Dead!
 Resign'd he fell; superior to the dart,
 That quench'd its rage in Y O U R S and B R I T A I N ' S
 Heart:

You mourn: but B R I T A I N, lull'd in rest profound, 5
 (Unconscious Britain!) slumbers o'er her wound.
 Exulting Dulness ey'd the setting Light,
 And flapp'd her wing, impatient for the Night:
 Rouz'd at the signal, Guilt collects her train,
 And counts the Triumphs of her growing Reign: 10
 With inextinguishable rage they burn;
 And Snake-hung E N V Y hisses o'er his Urn:
 Th' envenom'd Monsters spit their deadly foam,
 To blast the Laurel that surrounds his Tomb.

But Y O U, O W A R B U R T O N ! whose eye refin'd 15
 Can see the greatness of an honest mind;
 Can see each Virtue and each Grace unite,
 And taste the Raptures of a *pure* Delight;
 You visit oft his awful Page with Care,
 And view that bright Assemblage treasur'd there; 20

You trace the Chain that links his deep design,
And pour new Lustre on the glowing Line.
Yet deign to hear the efforts of a Muse,
Whose eye, not wing, his ardent flight pursues:
Intent from this great Archetype to draw 25
SATIRE's bright Form, and fix her equal Law;
Pleas'd if from hence th' unlearn'd may comprehend,
And rev'rence HIS and SATIRE's gen'rous End.

IN ev'ry Breast there burns an active flame,
The Love of Glory, or the Dread of Shame: 30
The Passion ONE, tho' various it appear,
As brighten'd into Hope, or dimm'd by Fear.
The lisping Infant, and the hoary Sire,
And Youth and Manhood feel the heart-born fire:
The Charms of Praise the Coy, the Modest woo, 35
And only fly, that Glory may pursue:
She, Pow'r resistless, rules the wise and great;
Bends ev'n reluctant Hermits at her feet;
Haunts the proud City, and the lowly Shade,
And sways alike the Sceptre and the Spade. 40

Thus Heav'n in Pity wakes the friendly Flame,
To urge Mankind on Deeds that merit Fame:
But Man, vain Man, in folly only wise,
Rejects the Manna sent him from the Skies:

Part I. ESSAY ON SATIRE. vii

With rapture hears corrupted Passion's call, 45
Still proudly prone to mingle with the stall,
As each deceitful shadow tempts his view,
He for the *imag'd* Substance quits the *true* ;
Eager to catch the visionary Prize,
In quest of Glory plunges deep in Vice ; 50
'Till madly zealous, impotently vain,
He forfeits ev'ry Praise he pants to gain.

Thus still imperious NATURE plies her part ;
And still her Dictates work in ev'ry heart.
Each Pow'r that sov'reign Nature bids enjoy, 55
Man may corrupt, but Man can ne'er destroy,
Like mighty rivers, with resistless force
The Passions rage, obstructed in their course ;
Swell to new heights, forbidden paths explore,
And drown those Virtues which they fed before. 60

And sure, the deadliest Foe to Virtue's flame,
Our worst of Evils, is *perverted Shame*.
Beneath this load what abject numbers groan,
Th' entangled Slaves to folly not their own !
Meanly by fashionable fear oppress'd, 65
We seek our Virtues in each other's breast ;
Blind to ourselves, adopt each foreign Vice,
Another's weakness, int'rest, or caprice,

Each Fool to low Ambition, poorly great,
 That pines in splendid wretchedness of state, 70
 Tir'd in the treach'rous Chace, would nobly yield,
 And, but for Shame, like SYLLA, quit the field:
 The Dæmon *Shame* paints strong the ridicule,
 And whispers close, "*The World will call you Fool.*"

Behold yon Wretch, by impious fashion driv'n, 75
 Believes and trembles while he scoffs at Heav'n.
 By weakness strong, and bold thro' fear alone,
 He dreads the sneer by shallow Coxcombs thrown;
 Dauntless pursues the path *Spinoza* trod;
 To Man a *Coward*, and a *Brave* to God. 80

Faith, Justice, Heav'n itself now quit their hold,
 When to false Fame the captiv'd heart is sold:
 Hence, blind to truth, relentless *Cato* dy'd;
 Nought could subdue his Virtue, but his Pride.

IMITATIONS.

VER. 80. *To Man a Coward, etc.*]

" Vois tu ce Libertin en public intrepide,
 " Qui preche contre un Dieu que dans son Ame il croit?
 " Il iroit embrasser la Verité, qu'il voit;
 " Mais de ses faux Amis il craint la Raillerie,
 " Et ne brave ainsi Dieu que par Poltronnerie.

BOILEAU, Ep. iii.

Hence chaste *Lucretia's* Innocence betray'd 85
 Fell by that Honour which was meant its aid.
 Thus Virtue sinks beneath unnumber'd woes,
 When Passions, born her friends, revolt her foes.

Hence SATIRE's pow'r: 'Tis her corrective part,
 To calm the wild disorders of the heart. 90
 She points the arduous height where Glory lies,
 And teaches mad Ambition to be wise:
 In the dark bosom wakes the fair desire,
 Draws good from ill, a brighter flame from fire;
 Strips black Oppression of her gay disguise, 95
 And bids the Hag in native horror rise;
 Strikes tow'ring Pride and lawless Rapine dead,
 And plants the wreath on Virtue's awful head.

Nor boasts the Muse a vain imagin'd Pow'r,
 Tho' oft she mourn those ills she cannot cure. 100
 The Worthy court her, and the Worthless fear:
 Who shun her piercing eye, that eye revere.
 Her awful voice the Vain and Vile obey,
 And ev'ry foe to Wisdom feels her sway.
 Smarts, Pedants, as she smiles, no more are vain; 105
 Desponding Fops resign the *clouded cane*:
 Hush'd at her voice, pert Folly's self is still,
 And Dulness wonders while she drops her quill.

x E S S A Y O N S A T I R E. Part I.

Like the arm'd BEE, with art most subtly true,
 From pois'nous Vice she draws a healing dew: 110
 Weak are the ties that civil arts can find,
 To quell the ferment of the tainted mind:
 Cunning evades, securely wrapt in wiles;
 And Force strong-finew'd rends th' unequal toils:
 The stream of Vice impetuous drives along, 115
 Too deep for Policy, for Pow'r too strong.
 Ev'n fair Religion, Native of the skies,
 Scorn'd by the Crowd, seeks refuge with the Wise;
 The Crowd with laughter spurns her awful train,
 And Mercy courts, and Justice frowns in vain. 120
 But SATIRE's shaft can pierce the harden'd breast:
 She plays a *ruling Passion* on the rest:
 Undaunted storms the batt'ry of his pride,
 And awes the *Brave* that Earth and Heav'n defy'd.
 When fell Corruption, by her vassals crown'd, 125
 Derides fall'n Justice prostrate on the ground;
 Swift to redress an injur'd People's groan,
 Bold SATIRE shakes the Tyrant on her throne;
 Pow'rful as Death, defies the sordid train,
 And Slaves and Sycophants surround in vain. 130

I M I T A T I O N S.

VER. 110. *From pois'nous Vice, etc.*] Alluding to these Lines of Mr. Pope;

“ In the nice Bee what Art so subtly true

“ From pois'nous Herbs extracts a healing Dew?

But with the friends of Vice, the foes of SATIRE,
All truth is Spleen; all just reproof, Ill-nature.

Well may they dread the Muse's fatal skill;
Well may they tremble when she draws her quill:
Her magic quill, that, like ITHURIEL's spear, 135
Reveals the cloven hoof, or lengthen'd ear:
Bids Vice and Folly take their nat'ral shapes,
Turns Duchesses to strumpets, Beaux to apes;
Drags the vile Whisp'rer from his dark abode,
'Till all the Dæmon starts up from the toad. 140

O fordid maxim, form'd to skreen the vile,
That true good-nature still must wear a smile!
In frowns array'd her beauties stronger rise,
When love of Virtue wakes her scorn of Vice:
Where Justice calls, 'tis Cruelty to save; 145
And 'tis the Law's good-nature hangs the Knave.
Who combats Virtue's foe is Virtue's friend;
Then judge of SATIRE's merit by her end:
To Guilt alone her vengeance stands confin'd,
The object of her love is all Mankind. 150
Scarce more the friend of Man, the wise must own,
Ev'n ALLEN's bounteous hand, than SATIRE's frown:
This to chastise, as That to bless, was giv'n;
Alike the faithful Ministers of Heav'n.

Oft in unfeeling hearts the shaft is spent: 155
Tho' strong th' example, weak the punishment.
They least are paid, who merit satire most;
Folly the *Laureat's*, Vice was *Chartres'* boast:
Then where's the wrong, to gibbet high the name
Of Fools and Knaves already dead to shame? 160
Oft SATIRE acts the faithful Surgeon's part;
Gen'rous and kind tho' painful is her art:
With caution bold, she only strikes to heal;
Tho' folly raves to break the friendly steel.
Then sure no fault impartial SATIRE knows, 165
Kind ev'n in Vengeance, kind to Virtue's foes,
Whose is the crime, the scandal too be theirs:
The Knave and Fool are their own Libellers.

P A R T II.

DARE nobly then: But conscious of your trust,
 As ever warm and bold, be ever just: 170
 Nor court applause in these degen'rate days:
 The Villain's censure is extorted praise.

But chief, be steady in a noble end,
 And shew Mankind that Truth has yet a friend.
 'Tis mean for empty praise of wit to write, 175
 As Foplings grin to shew their Teeth are white:
 To brand a doubtful folly with a smile,
 Or madly blaze unknown defects, is vile:
 'Tis doubly vile, when, but to prove your art,
 You fix an arrow in a blameless heart. 180
 O lost to honour's voice, O doom'd to shame,
 Thou Fiend accurs'd, thou Murderer of Fame!
 Fell Ravisher, from Innocence to tear
 That name, than liberty, than life more dear!
 Where shall thy baseness meet its just return, 185
 Or what repay thy guilt, but endless scorn?
 And know, immortal Truth shall mock thy toil;
 Immortal Truth shall bid the shaft recoil;

With rage retorted, wing the deadly dart;
And empty all its poison in thy heart. 190

With caution next, the dang'rous pow'r apply;
An eagle's talon asks an eagle's eye:
Let SATIRE then her proper object know,
And ere she strike, be sure she strike a foe.
Nor fondly deem the real fool confest, 195
Because blind *Ridicule* conceives a jest:
Before whose altar Virtue oft hath bled,
And oft a destin'd Victim shall be lead:
Lo, *Shaftsb'ry* rears her high on Reason's throne,
And loads the Slave with honours not her own: 200
Big-swoln with folly, as her smiles provoke,
Prophaneness spawns, pert Dunces nurse the joke!
Come, let us join a while this titt'ring crew,
And own the *Idiot Guide* for once is true;
Deride our weak forefather's musty rule, 205
Who *therefore* smil'd, *because* they saw a Fool;
Sublimer logic now adorns our isle,
We *therefore* see a Fool, *because* we smile.
Truth in her gloomy Cave why fondly seek?
Lo, gay she sits in Laughter's dimple cheek: 210
Contemns each furly Academic foe,
And courts the spruce Freethinker and the Beau.

Dædalian arguments but few can trace,
 But all can read the language of grimace.
 Hence mighty Ridicule's all-conqu'ring hand 215
 Shall work *Herculean* wonders thro' the Land:
 Bound in the magic of her cobweb chain,
 You, mighty *WARBURTON*, shall rage in vain,
 In vain the trackless maze of Truth you scan,
 And lend th' informing Clue to erring Man: 220
 No more shall Reason boast her pow'r divine,
 Her Base eternal shook by Folly's mine!
 Truth's sacred Fort th' exploded laugh shall win;
 And Coxcombs vanquish *BERKLEY* by a grin.

But you more sage, reject th' inverted rule, 225
 That Truth is e'er explor'd by Ridicule:
 On truth, on falsehood let her colours fall,
 She throws a dazzling glare alike on all;
 As the gay Prism but mocks the flatter'd eye,
 And gives to ev'ry object ev'ry dye. 230
 Beware the mad Advent'rer: bold and blind
 She hoists her sail, and drives with ev'ry wind;
 Deaf as the Storm to sinking Virtue's groan,
 Nor heeds a Friend's destruction, or her own.
 Let clear-ey'd Reason at the helm preside, 235
 Bear to the wind, or stem the furious tide;

Then Mirth may urge, when Reason can explore,
This point the way, *that* waft us glad to shore.

Tho' distant Times may rise in SATIRE's page,
 Yet chief 'tis Her's to draw the *present Age*. 240

With Wisdom's lustre, Folly's shade contrast,
 And judge the reigning Manners by the past:

Bid *Britain's* Heroes (awful Shades!) arise,

And ancient Honour beam on modern Vice:

Point back to minds ingenuous actions fair, 245

Till the Sons blush at what their Fathers were:

Ere yet 'twas beggary the great to trust;

Ere yet 'twas quite a folly to be just;

When *low-born* Sharpers only dar'd a lie,

Or falsify'd the card, or cogg'd the Dye; 250

Ere Lewdness the stain'd garb of Honour wore,

Or Chastity was carted for the Whore;

Vice flutter'd, in the plumes of Freedom dress'd;

Or public Spirit was the public jest.

Be ever, in a just expression, bold, 255

Yet ne'er degrade fair SATIRE to a Scold:

Let no unworthy mien her form debase,

But let her smile, and let her frown with grace:

In mirth be temp'rate, temp'rate in her spleen;

Nor, while she preaches modesty, obscene. 260

Deep let her wound, not rankle to a fore,
 Nor call his Lordship —, her Grace a —:
 The Muse's charms resistless then assail,
 When wrapt in *Irony's* transparent veil:
 Her beauties half-conceal'd, the more surprize, 265
 And keener lustre sparkles in her eyes.
 Then be your line with sharp encomiums grac'd:
 Style *Clodius* honourable, *Busa* chaste.

Dart not on Folly an indignant eye:
 Who e'er discharg'd Artillery on a Fly? 270
 Deride not Vice: Absurd the thought and vain,
 To bind the Tiger in so weak a chain.
 Nay more: when flagrant crimes your laughter move,
 The Knave exults: to smile is to approve.
 The Muse's labour then success shall crown, 275
 When Folly feels her smile, and Vice her frown.

Know next what measures to each Theme belong,
 And suit your thoughts and numbers to your song:
 On wing proportion'd to your quarry rise,
 And stoop to earth, or soar among the skies. 280
 Thus when a modish folly you rehearse,
 Free the expression, simple be the verse,
 In artless numbers paint th' ambitious Peer,
 That mounts the box, and shines a Charioteer:

In strains familiar sing the midnight toil 285

Of Camps and Senates disciplin'd by *Hoyle*;

Patriots and Chiefs, whose deep design invades

And carries off the captive King — of *Spades*!

Let SATIRE here in milder vigour shine,

And gayly graceful sport along the line; 290

Bid courtly Fashion quit her thin pretence,

And smile each Affectation into sense.

Not so when Virtue by her Guards betray'd,

Spurn'd from her Throne, implores the Muse's aid:

When *crimes*, which erst in kindred darkness lay, 295

Rise frontless, and insult the eye of day;

Indignant *Hymen* veils his hallow'd fires,

And white-rob'd Chastity with tears retires;

When rank Adultery on the genial bed

Hot from *Cocytus* rears her baleful head: 300

When private Faith and public Trust are sold,

And Traitors barter Liberty for gold:

When fell Corruption dark and deep, like fate,

Saps the foundation of a sinking State:

When Giant-Vice and Irreligion rise, 305

On mountain'd falsehoods to invade the skies:

Then warmer numbers glow thro' SATIRE's page,

And all her smiles are darken'd into rage:

On eagle-wing she gains *Parnassus*' height,

Not lofty EPIC soars a nobler flight: 310

Then keener indignation fires her eye;
 Then flash her lightnings, and her thunders fly;
 Wide and more wide her flaming bolts are hurl'd,
 Till all her wrath involves the guilty World.

Yet SATIRE oft assumes a gentler mien, 315
 And beams on Virtue's friends a smile serene:
 She wounds reluctant; pours her balm with joy;
 Glad to commend where Worth attracts her eye.
 But chief, when *Virtue, Learning, Arts* decline,
 She joys to see *unconquer'd* merit shine; 320
 Where bursting glorious, with departing ray,
 True Genius gilds the close of Britain's Day:
 With joy she sees the stream of Roman art
 From MURRAY's tongue flow purer to the heart:
 Sees YORKE to Fame, e'er yet to Manhood known,
 And just to ev'ry Virtue but his own: 326
 Hears unstain'd CAM with gen'rous pride proclaim
 A SAGE's, CRITIC's, and a POET's name:
 Beholds, where WIDCOMBE's happy hills ascend,
 Each orphan'd Art and Virtue find a friend: 330
 To HAGLEY's honour'd Shade directs her view;
 And culls each flow'r, to form a Wreath for You.

But tread with cautious step this dang'rous ground
 Beset with faithless precipices round:

Truth be your guide: disdain Ambition's call;
 And if you fall with Truth, you greatly fall.
 'Tis Virtue's *native lustre* that must *shine*;
 The Poet can but *set it* in his line:
 And who unmov'd with laughter can behold
 A *sordid pebble* meanly grac'd with *gold*? 340
 Let *real* Merit then adorn your lays,
 For Shame attends on prostituted praise:
 And all your wit, your most distinguish'd art
 But makes us grieve you want an honest heart. 344
 Nor think the Muse by SATIRE's Law confin'd:
 She yields description of the noblest kind.
 Inferior art the Landskip may design,
 And paint the purple ev'ning in the line:
 Her daring thought essays a higher plan;
 Her hand delineates Passion, pictures Man. 350
 And great the toil, the latent soul to trace,
 To paint the heart, and catch internal grace;
 By turns bid Vice or Virtue strike our eyes,
 Now bid a *Wolfey* or a *Cromwell* rise;
 Now with a touch more sacred and refin'd, 355
 Call forth a CHESTERFIELD's or LONSDALE's mind.
 Here sweet or strong may ev'ry Colour flow:
 Here let the pencil warm, the canvass glow:
 Of light and shade provoke the noble strife,
 And wake each striking feature into life. 360

P A R T III.

THRO' Ages thus has SATIRE keenly shin'd,
 The Friend to Truth, to Virtue, and Mankind:
 Yet the bright flame from Virtue ne'er had sprung,
 And Man was guilty e'er the Poet sung.
This Muse in silence joy'd each better Age, 365
 Till glowing crimes had wak'd her into rage.
 Truth saw her honest spleen with new delight,
 And bade her wing her shafts, and urge their flight.
 First on the Sons of *Greece* she prov'd her art,
 And *Sparta* felt the fierce IAMBIC dart^a. 370
 To LATIUM next, avenging SATIRE flew:
 The flaming faulchion rough LUCILIUS^b drew;
 With dauntless warmth in Virtue's cause engag'd,
 And conscious Villains trembled as he rag'd,

NOTES.

^a Archilochum proprio rabies armavit Iambo. HOR.

^b Ense velut stricto quoties Lucilius ardens

Infremuit, rubet auditor cui frigida mens est

Criminibus, tacita sudant præcordia culpa. JUV. S. i.

Then sportive HORACE^c caught the gen'rous fire;
 For SATIRE's bow resign'd the sounding lyre:
 Each arrow polish'd in his hand was seen,
 And, as it grew more polish'd, grew more keen.
 His art, conceal'd in study'd negligence,
 Politely fly, cajol'd the foes of sense: 380
 He seem'd to sport and trifle with the dart,
 But while he sported, drove it to the heart.

In graver strains majestic PERSIUS wrote,
 Big with a ripe exuberance of thought:
 Greatly sedate, contemn'd a Tyrant's reign, 385
 And lash'd corruption with a calm disdain.

More ardent eloquence, and boundless rage,
 Inflame bold JUVENAL's exalted page,
 His mighty numbers aw'd corrupted *Rome*,
 And swept audacious Greatness to its doom; 390
 The headlong torrent thund'ring from on high,
 Rent the proud rock that lately brav'd the sky.

NOTES.

^c Omne vafer vitium ridenti Flaccus amico
 Tangit, et admissus circum præcordia ludit,
 Callidus excusso populum suspendere naso. PERS. S. i.

But lo! the fatal Victor of Mankind!
 Swoln *Luxury!*—pale *Ruin* stalks behind!
 As countless Insects from the north-east pour, 395
 To blast the Spring, and ravage ev'ry flow'r:
 So barb'rous Millions spread contagious death:
 The sick'ning Laurel wither'd at their breath.
 Deep Superstition's night the skies o'erhung,
 Beneath whose baleful dews the Poppy sprung. 400
 No longer Genius woo'd the Nine to love,
 But Dulness nodded in the Muse's grove:
 Wit, Spirit, Freedom, were the sole offence,
 Nor aught was held so dangerous as Sense.

At length, again fair Science shot her ray, 405
 Dawn'd in the skies, and spoke returning day.
 Now, SATIRE triumph o'er thy flying foe,
 Now load thy quiver, string thy slacken'd bow!
 'Tis done—See great ERASMUS breaks the spell,
 And wounds triumphant Folly in her Cell! 410
 (In vain the solemn Cowl surrounds her face,
 Vain all her bigot cant, her sour grimace)
 With shame compell'd her leaden-throne to quit,
 And own the force of Reason urg'd by Wit. 414

'Twas then plain DONNE in honest vengeance rose,
 His Wit harmonious, tho' his Rhyme was prose;

He 'midst an Age of Puns and Pedants wrote
With genuine sense, and *Roman* strength of thought.

Yet scarce had SATIRE well relum'd her flame, 419
(With grief the Muse records her Country's shame)
Ere *Britain* saw the foul revolt commence,
And treach'rous Wit began her war with Sense.
Then rose a shameless mercenary train,
Whom latest Time shall view with just disdain:
A race fantastick, in whose gaudy line 425
Untutor'd thought, and tinsel beauty shine;
Wit's shatter'd Mirror lies in fragments bright,
Reflects not Nature, but confounds the sight.
Dry Morals the Court-Poet blush'd to sing:
'Twas all his praise to say, "*the oddest thing.*" 430
Proud for a jest obscene, a Patron's nod,
To martyr Virtue, or blaspheme his God.

Ill-fated DRYDEN! who unmov'd can see
Th' extremes of wit and meanness join'd in Thee! 434
Flames that could mount, and gain their kindred skies,
Low-creeping in the putrid sink of vice;
A Muse whom Wisdom woo'd, but woo'd in vain,
The Pimp of Pow'r, the Prostitute to Gain:
Wreaths, that should deck fair Virtue's form alone,
To Strumpets, Traitors, Tyrants, vilely thrown: 440

Unrival'd Parts, the scorn of honest fame;
And Genius rise, a Monument of shame!

More happy *France*: immortal BOILEAU there
Supported Genius with a Sage's care:
Him with her love propitious SATIRE blest, 445
And breath'd her airs divine into his breast:
Fancy and Sense to form his line conspire,
And faultless Judgment guides the purest Fire.

But see, at length, the *British* Genius smile,
And show'r her bounties o'er her favour'd Isle: 450
Behold for POPE she twines the laurel crown,
And centers ev'ry Poet's pow'r in one:
Each *Roman*'s force adorns his various page,
Gay smiles, corrected strength, and manly rage,
Despairing Guilt and Dulness loath the fight, 455
As Spectres vanish at approaching light:
In this clear Mirror with delight we view
Each image justly fine, and boldly true:
Here Vice, drag'd forth by Truth's supreme decree,
Beholds and hates her own deformity: 460
While self-seen Virtue in the faithful line
With modest joy surveys her form divine.
But oh, what thoughts, what numbers shall I find,
But faintly to express the Poet's mind!

Who yonder Star's effulgence can display, 465
Unless he dip his pencil in the ray?

Who paint a God, unless the God inspire?

What catch the Lightning, but the speed of fire?

So, mighty POPE, to make thy Genius known,
All pow'r is weak, all numbers—but thy own. 470

Each Muse for thee with kind contention strove,
For thee the Graces left th' IDALIAN grove;
With watchful fondness o'er thy cradle hung,
Attun'd thy voice, and form'd thy infant tongue.

Next, to her Bard majestic Wisdom came; 475

The Bard enraptur'd caught the heav'nly flame:

With taste superior scorn'd the venal tribe,

Whom fear can sway, or guilty greatness bribe;

At Fancy's call who rear the wanton sail,

Sport with the stream, and trifle in the gale: 480

Sublimar views thy daring Spirit bound;

Thy mighty Voyage was Creation's round;

Intent new Worlds of Wisdom to explore,

And bless Mankind with Virtue's sacred store;

A nobler joy than Wit can give, impart; 485

And pour a moral transport o'er the heart.

Fantastic Wit shoots momentary fires,

And, like a Meteor, while we gaze, expires:

Wit kindled by the sulph'rous breath of Vice,

Like the blue lightning, while it shines, destroys: 490

Part III. ESSAY ON SATIRE. xxvii

But Genius, fir'd by Truth's eternal ray,
Burns clear and constant, like the source of day:
Like this, its beam prolifick and refin'd,
Feeds, warms, inspirits, and exalts the mind;
Mildly dispels each wint'ry Passion's gloom, 495
And opens all the Virtues into bloom.
This Praise, immortal POPE to thee be giv'n:
Thy Genius was indeed a *Gift* from Heav'n.
Hail, Bard unequal'd, in whose deathless line
Reason and Wit with strength collected shine; 500
Where matchless Wit but wins the second praise,
Lost, nobly lost, in Truth's superior blaze.
Did FRIENDSHIP e'er mislead thy wand'ring Muse?
That Friendship sure may plead the *great* excuse:
That sacred Friendship which inspir'd thy Song, 505
Fair in defect, and *amiably* wrong.
Error like this ev'n Truth can scarce reprove;
'Tis almost Virtue when it flows from Love.

Ye deathless Names, ye Sons of endless praise,
By Virtue crown'd with never-fading bays! 510
Say, shall an artless Muse, if you inspire,
Light her pale lamp at your immortal fire?
Or, if, O WARBURTON, inspir'd by You,
The daring Muse a nobler path pursue,
By You inspir'd, on trembling pinion soar, 515
The sacred founts of social blest explore,

In her bold numbers chain the Tyrant's rage,
 And bid *her Country's glory* fire her page:
 If such her fate, do thou, fair *Truth*, descend,
 And watchful guard her in an honest end: 520
 Kindly severe, instruct her equal line
 To court no Friend, nor own a Foe but *thine*,
 But if her giddy eye should vainly quit
 Thy sacred paths, to run the maze of wit;
 If her apostate heart should e'er incline 525
 To offer incense at Corruption's shrine;
 Urge, urge thy pow'r, the black attempt confound,
 And dash the smoaking Censer to the ground.
 Thus aw'd to fear, instructed Bards may see,
 That Guilt is doom'd to sink in Infamy. 530

AN
ESSAY
ON
MAN:
TO

H. ST. JOHN, L. BOLINGBROKE.

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MA

Y A S S E

ON

M A N

TO

H. E. Jones, Esq., Baltimore, Md.

THE DESIGN.

HAVING proposed to write some pieces on Human Life and Manners, such as (to use my lord Bacon's expression) *come home to Men's Business and Bosoms*, I thought it more satisfactory to begin with considering *Man* in the abstract, his *Nature* and his *State*; since, to prove any moral Duty, to enforce any moral precept, or to examine the perfection or imperfection of any creature whatsoever, it is necessary first to know what *condition* and *relation* it is placed in, and what is the proper *end* and *purpose* of its *being*.

The science of Human Nature is, like all other sciences, reduced to a *few clear points*: There are not *many certain truths* in this world. It is therefore in the Anatomy of the mind as in that of the Body; more good will accrue to mankind by attending to the large, open, and perceptible parts, than by studying too much such finer nerves and vessels, the conformations and uses of which will for ever escape our observation. The *disputes* are all upon these last, and, I will venture to say, they have less sharpened the *wits* than the *hearts* of men against each other, and have diminished the practice, more than advanced the theory, of Morality. If I could flatter myself that this Essay has any merit, it is in steering betwixt the extremes of doctrines seemingly opposite, in passing over terms utterly unintelligible, and in forming a *temperate*, yet not *inconsistent*, and a *short* yet not *imperfect*, system of Ethics.

This

THE DESIGN.

This I might have done in prose; but I chose verse, and even rhyme, for two reasons. The one will appear obvious; that principles, maxims, or precepts so written, both strike the reader more strongly at first, and are more easily retained by him afterwards: The other may seem odd, but is true. I found I could express them more *shortly* this way than in prose itself; and nothing is more certain, than that much of the *force* as well as *grace* of arguments or instructions, depends on their *conciseness*. I was unable to treat this part of my subject more in *detail*, without becoming dry and tedious; or more *poetically*, without sacrificing perspicuity to ornament, without wandering from the precision, or breaking the chain of reasoning: If any man can unite all these without diminution of any of them, I freely confess he will compass a thing above my capacity.

What is now published, is only to be considered as a *general Map* of MAN, marking out no more than the *greater parts*, their *extent*, their *limits*, and their *connection*, but leaving the particular to be more fully delineated in the charts which are to follow. Consequently, these Epistles in their progress (if I have health and leisure to make any progress) will be less dry, and more susceptible of poetical ornament. I am here only opening the *fountains*, and clearing the passage. To deduce the *rivers*, to follow them in their course, and to observe their effects, may be a task more agreeable.

A N
E S S A Y on M A N,
I N
F O U R E P I S T L E S,
T O
H. St. John, Lord Bolingbroke.

A R G U M E N T O F
E P I S T L E I.

*Of the Nature and State of Man, with respect
to the U N I V E R S E.*

*OF Man in the abstract—I. That we can judge only
with regard to our own system, being ignorant of
the relations of systems and things, § 17, &c. II. That
Man is not to be deemed imperfect, but a Being suited
to his place and rank in the creation, agreeable to the
general Order of things, and conformable to Ends
and Relations to him unknown, § 35, &c. III. That
it is partly upon his ignorance of future events, and*
VOL. III. C

partly upon the hope of a future state, that all his happiness in the present depends, § 77, &c. IV. The pride of aiming at more knowledge, and pretending to more perfection, the cause of Man's error and misery. The impiety of putting himself in the place of God, and judging of the fitness or unfitness, perfection or imperfection, justice or injustice, of his dispensations, § 109, &c. V. The absurdity of conceiving himself the final cause of the creation, or expecting that perfection in the moral world, which is not in the natural, § 131, &c. VI. The unreasonableness of his complaints against Providence, while on the one hand he demands the Perfections of the Angels, and on the other the bodily qualifications of the Brutes; though, to possess any of the sensitive faculties in a higher degree, would render him miserable, § 173, &c. VII. That throughout the whole visible world, an universal order and gradation in the sensual and mental faculties is observed, which causes a subordination of creature to creature, and of all creatures to Man. The gradations of sense, instinct, thought, reflection, reason; that Reason alone countervails all the other faculties, § 207. VIII. How much further this order and subordination of living creatures may extend, above and below us; were any part of which broken, not that part only, but the whole connected creation must be destroyed, § 233. IX. The extravagance, madness, and pride of such a desire, § 250. X. The consequence of all, the absolute submission due to Providence, both as to our present and future state, § 281, &c. to the end.



HOPE humbly then, with trembling Pinions soar,
Wait the great teacher Death, and God adore.
Essay on Man Ep. I.

EPISTLE I.

AWAKE, my ST. JOHN ! leave all meaner things
To low ambition, and the pride of Kings.

Let us (since Life can little more supply
Than just to look about us and to die)

Expatriate free o'er all this scene of Man ; 5

A mighty maze ! but not without a plan ;

A Wild, where weeds and flow'rs promiscuous shoot
Or Garden, tempting with forbidden fruit.

COMMENTARY.

THE Opening of this poem, [in fifteen lines] is taken up in giving an account of the Subject ; which, agreeably to the title, is an *ESSAY ON MAN*, or a Philosophical Enquiry into his *Nature* and *End*, his *Passions* and *Pursuits*.

The Exordium relates to the whole work, of which the *Essay on Man* was only the first book. The 6th, 7th, and 8th lines allude to the subjects of this *Essay*, viz. the general Order and Design of Providence ; the Constitution of the human Mind ; the origin, use, and end of the Passions and Affections, both selfish and social ; and the wrong pursuits of Power, Pleasure, and Happiness. The 10th, 11th, 12th, &c. have relation to the subjects of the books intended to follow, viz. the Characters and Capa-

NOTES.

VER. 7, 8. *A Wild, — Or Garden,*] The *Wild* relates to the human *passions*, productive (as he explains in the second epistle) both of good and evil. The *Garden*, to human *reason*, so often *tempting* us to transgress the bounds God has set to it, and to wander in fruitless enquiries.

Together let us beat this ample field,
 Try what the open, what the covert yield; 10
 The latent tracts, the giddy heights, explore
 Of all who blindly creep, or sightless soar;
 Eye Nature's walks, shoot Folly as it flies,
 And catch the Manners living as they rise;
 Laugh where we must, be candid where we can; 15
 But vindicate the ways of God to Man.

COMMENTARY.

cities of Men, and the Limits of Science, which once transgressed, ignorance begins, and errors without end succeed. The 13th and 14th, to the Knowledge of Mankind, and the various Manners of the age.

The Poet tells us next [line 16th] with what design he wrote, *viz.*

“ To vindicate the ways of God to Man.

The Men he writes against, he frequently informs us, are such as *weigh their opinion against Providence* (y 114.) such

NOTES.

VER. 12. *Of all who blindly creep, &c.] i. e.* Those who only follow the blind guidance of their Passions; or those who leave behind them common sense and sober reason, in their high flights through the regions of Metaphysics. Both which follies are exposed in the fourth epistle, where the popular and philosophical errors concerning Happiness are detected. The figure is taken from *animal* life.

VER. 15. *Laugh where we must, &c.]* Intimating that human *follies* are so strangely absurd, that it is not in the power of the most *compassionate*, on some occasions, to restrain their mirth: And that its *crimes* are so flagitious, that the most *candid* have seldom an opportunity, on this subject, to exercise their virtue.

I. Say first, of God above, or Man below,
 What can we reason, but from what we know?
 Of Man, what see we but his station here,
 From which to reason, or to which refer?

20

COMMENTARY.

as cry, *if Man's unhappy, God's unjust* (y 118.) or such as fall into the notion, *that Vice and Virtue there is none at all* (Ep. ii. y 212.) This occasions the poet to divide his vindication of the ways of God, into two parts. In the first of which he gives direct answers to those objections which libertine Men, on a view of the disorders arising from the perversity of the human will, have intended against Providence. And in the second, he obviates all those objections, by a true delineation of human Nature; or a general, but exact, *map of Man*. The first epistle is employed in the management of the first part of this dispute; and the three following in the discussion of the second. So that this whole book constitutes a complete *Essay on Man*, written for the best purpose, *to vindicate the ways of God*.

VER. 17. *Say first, of God above, or Man below, &c.*] The poet having declared his *Subject*; his *End of writing*; and the *Quality of his Adversaries*; proceeds (from y 16 to 23.) to instruct us, *from whence* he intends to draw his arguments; namely, *from the visible things of God in this system, to demonstrate the invisible things of God, his eter-*

NOTES.

VER. 19, 20. *Of Man, what see we but his station here,
 From which to reason, or to which refer?*]

The sense is, “we see nothing of Man, but as he stands
 “ at present in his station here: From which station, all
 “ our reasonings on his *nature* and *end* must be drawn;
 “ and to this station they must all be referred.” The consequence is, that our reasonings on his *nature* and *end* must needs be very imperfect.

Thro' worlds unnumber'd tho' the God be known,
'Tis ours to trace him only in our own.

He, who thro' vast immensity can pierce,
See worlds on worlds compose one universe,
Observe how system into system runs, 25

What other planets circle other suns,
What vary'd Being peoples ev'ry star,
May tell why Heav'n has made us as we are.

But of this frame, the bearings, and the ties,
The strong connections, nice dependencies, 30

COMMENTARY.

nal Power and God-head: And why? because we can reason only from what we know; and as we know no more of Man than what we see of his station here; so we know no more of God than what we see of his dispensations in this station; being able to trace him no further than to the limits of our own system. This naturally leads the poet to exprobrate the miserable Folly and Impiety of pretending to pry into, and call in question, the profound dispensations of Providence: Which reproof contains (from v 22 to 43.) a sublime description of the Omniscience of God, and the miserable Blindness and Presumption of Man.

NOTES.

VER. 21. *Thro' worlds unnumber'd, &c.]* Hunc cognoscimus solummodo per Proprietates suas & Attributa, & per sapientissimas & optimas rerum structuras & causas finales. *Newtoni Princ. Schol. gen. sub fin.*

VER. 30. *The strong connections, nice dependencies,]* The thought is very noble, and expressed with great beauty, and philosophic exactness. The system of the Universe is a combination of *natural* and *moral* Fitnesses, as the human

Gradations just, has thy pervading soul
Look'd thro' ? or can a part contain the whole ?

Is the great chain, that draws all to agree,
And drawn supports, upheld by God, or thee ?

II. Presumptuous Man ! the reason wouldst thou
find, 35

Why form'd so weak, so little, and so blind ?

First, if thou canst, the harder reason guess,

Why form'd no weaker, blinder, and no less ?

Ask of thy mother earth, why oaks are made

Taller or stronger than the weeds they shade ! 40

NOTES.

system is, of *body* and *spirit*. By the *strong connections*, therefore, the Poet alluded to the *natural* part ; and by the *nice dependencies* to the *moral*. For the *Essay on Man* is not a system of NATURALISM but of NATURAL RELIGION. [See the *View of Lord Bolingbroke's Philosophy*.] Hence it is, that, where he supposes disorders may tend to some greater good in the *natural* world, he supposes they may tend likewise to some greater good in the *moral*, as appears from these sublime images in the following lines,

“ If plagues or earthquakes break not Heav'n's design,

“ Why then a Borgia, or a Catiline ?

“ Who knows, but he, whose hand the light'ning forms,

“ Who heaves old Ocean, and who wings the storms ;

“ Pours fierce Ambition in a Cæsar's mind,

“ Or turns young Ammon loose to scourge Mankind ?

VER. 35 to 42.] In these lines the poet has joined the beauty of argumentation to the sublimity of thought ; where the similar instances, proposed for his adversaries examination, shew as well the *absurdity* of their complaints against Order, as the *fruitlessness* of their enquiries into the arcana of the Godhead.

Or ask of yonder argent fields above,
Why Jove's Satellites are less than Jove?

Of Systems possible, if 'tis confest
That Wisdom infinite must form the best,
Where all must full or not coherent be, 45

And all that rises, rise in due degree;
Then, in the scale of reas'ning life, 'tis plain,
There must be, somewhere, such a rank as Man:
And all the question (wrangle e'er so long)
Is only this, if God has plac'd him wrong? 50

COMMENTARY.

VER. 43. *Of systems possible, &c.*] So far the Poet's modest and sober Introduction; in which he truly observes, that no wisdom less than omniscient

“ Can tell why Heav'n has made us as we are.

Yet, though we be unable to discover the *particular* reasons for this mode of our existence, we may be assured in *general* that it is *right*. For now, entering upon his argument, he lays down this evident proposition as the foundation of his Thesis, which he reasonably supposes will be allowed him, *That, of all possible systems, infinite wisdom hath formed the best* (ψ 43, 44.) From whence he draws two consequences:

1. The *first* (from ψ 44 to 51.) is, that as the best system cannot but be such a one as hath no inconnected Void; such a one in which there is a perfect coherence and gradual subordination in all its parts; there must needs be, in some part or other of the scale of reasoning life, such a creature as MAN: Which reduces the dispute to this absurd question, *Whether God has placed him wrong?*

Respecting Man, whatever wrong we call,
 May, must be right, as relative to all.
 In human works, tho' labour'd on with pain,
 A thousand movements scarce one purpose gain;
 In God's, one single can its end produce; 55
 Yet serves to second too some other use.
 So Man, who here seems principal alone,
 Perhaps acts second to some sphere unknown,
 Touches some wheel, or verges to some goal;
 'Tis but a part we see, and not a whole. 60

C O M M E N T A R Y.

VER. 51. *Respecting Man, &c.*] It being shewn that MAN, *the Subject* of this enquiry, has a necessary place in such a system as this is confessed to be; and it being evident, that the abuse of Free-will, from whence proceeds all moral evil, is the certain effect of such a creature's existence; the next question will be, How these evils can be accounted for, consistently with the idea we have of God's moral attributes? Therefore,

2. *The second consequence he draws from his principle, That of all possible systems, infinite wisdom has formed the best, i.e. that whatever is wrong in our private system, is right as relative to the whole:*

“ Respecting Man, whatever wrong we call,
 “ May, must be right, as relative to ALL.

That it *may*, he proves (from v 52 to 61.) by shewing in what consists the difference between the *systematic* works of God, and those of Man; *viz.* that, in the latter, a thousand movements scarce gain one purpose; in the former, one movement gains many purposes. So that

—“ Man, who here seems *principal* alone,
 “ Perhaps acts *second* to some sphere unknown.

When the proud steed shall know why Man restrains
His fiery course, or drives him o'er the plains;
When the dull Ox, why now he breaks the clod,
Is now a victim, and now Ægypt's God:

VARIATIONS.

In the former Editions *ψ* 64.

Now wears a garland an Ægyptian God.

altered as above for the reason given in the note.

COMMENTARY.

And acting thus, the appearance of *wrong* in the *partial* system may be *right* in the *universal*, For

“ 'Tis but a part we see, and not a whole.

That it *must*, the whole body of this epistle is employed to illustrate and enforce. Thus *partial Evil*, is *universal Good*; and thus Providence is fairly acquitted.

VER. 61. *When the proud steed, &c.*] From all this the Poet draws a general conclusion (from *ψ* 60 to 91.) that, as what has been said is sufficient to vindicate the ways of Providence, Man should rest submissive and content; and own every thing to be disposed for the best; that to think of discovering the *manner* how God conducts this wonderful scheme to its completion, is as absurd as to imagine that the horse and ox shall ever be able to comprehend why they undergo such different treatment in the hand of Man; nay, that such knowledge, if communicated, would be even *pernicious*, and make us *neglect* or *desert* our Duty here. This he illustrates by the case of the lamb, which is happy in not knowing the fate that attends it from the

NOTES.

VER. 64.—*Ægypt's God*:] Called so, because the God *Apis* was worshiped universally over the whole land of Egypt.

EP. I. E S S A Y O N M A N. 11

Then shall Man's pride and dulness comprehend 65
His actions', passions', being's, use and end;
Why doing, suff'ring, check'd, impell'd; and why
This hour a slave, the next a deity,

Then say not Man's imperfect, Heav'n in fault;
Say rather, Man's as perfect as he ought: 70
His knowledge measur'd to his state and place;
His time a moment, and a point his space.
If to be perfect in a certain sphere,
What matter, soon or late, or here or there?
The blest to day is as completely so, 75
As who began a thousand years ago.

III. Heav'n from all creatures hides the book of Fate,
All but the page prescrib'd, their present state:
From brutes what men, from men what spirits know:
Or who could suffer Being here below? 80

V A R I A T I O N S.

After y 68. the following lines in the first Ed.

If to be perfect in a certain sphere,
What matters soon or late, or here or there?
The blest to-day is as completely so
As who began ten thousand years ago.

C O M M E N T A R Y.

butcher; and from thence takes occasion to observe, that
God is the equal master of all his creatures, and provides
for the proper happiness of each and every of them.

The lamb thy riot dooms to bleed to-day,
 Had he thy Reason, would he skip and play?
 Pleas'd to the last, he crops the flow'ry food,
 And licks the hand just rais'd to shed his blood.
 Oh blindness to the future! kindly giv'n, 85
 That each may fill the circle mark'd by Heav'n:
 Who sees with equal eye, as God of all,
 A hero perish, or a sparrow fall,
 Atoms or systems into ruin hurl'd,
 And now a bubble burst, and now a world. 90

Hope humbly then; with trembling pinions soar;
 Wait the great teacher Death; and God adore.

VARIATIONS.

After *ψ* 88. in the MS.

No great, no little; 'tis as much decreed
 That Virgil's Gnat should die as Cæsar bleed.

COMMENTARY.

VER. 91. *Hope humbly then; &c.*] But now an Objector is supposed to put in, and say, "You tell us indeed, that all things shall terminate in good; but we see ourselves surrounded with present Evil; yet you forbid us all inquiry into the manner how we are to be extricated; and, in a word, leave us in a very disconsolate condition." Not so, replies the Poet you may reasonably, if you so please, receive much comfort from the HOPE of a happy futurity; a *Hope* implanted in the human breast by God himself for this very purpose, as an earnest of that Bliss, which, al-

NOTES.

VER. 87. *Who sees with equal eye, &c.*] Matth. x. 29.

What future blifs, he gives not thee to know,
But gives that Hope to be thy blessing now.

VARIATIONS.

In the first Fol. and Quarto,

What blifs *above* he gives not thee to know,
But gives that Hope to be thy blifs *below*.

COMMENTARY.

ways flying from us here, is reserved for the good Man hereafter. The reason why the poet chuses to insist on this proof of a future state, in preference to others, is in order to give his system (which is founded in a sublime and improved *Platonism*) the greater grace of uniformity. For HOPE was *Plato's* peculiar argument for a future state; and the words here employed—*The soul uneasy* &c. his peculiar expression. The poet in this place, therefore, says in express terms, that GOD GAVE US HOPE TO SUPPLY THAT FUTURE BLISS, WHICH HE AT PRESENT KEEPS HID FROM US. In his second epistle, *ψ* 274. he goes still further, and says, this HOPE quits us not even at Death, when every thing mortal drops from us:

“ Hope travels thro’, nor quits us when we die.

NOTES.

VER. 93. *What future blifs, &c.*] It hath been objected, that “ the *System of the best* weakens the other natural arguments for a future state; because, if the evils which good Men suffer, promote the benefit of the whole, then every thing is here in order: and nothing amiss that wants to be set right: Nor has the good man any reason to expect amends, when the evils he suffered had such a tendency.” To this it may be replied, 1. That the Poet tells us (Ep. iv. *ψ* 361.) that *God loves from whole to parts*. 2. The *system of the best* is so far from weakening those natural arguments, that it strengthens and supports them. For if those evils, to which good men are subject, be mere Disorders, without any tendency to the greater good of the whole; then, though we must indeed conclude that they will hereafter

Hope springs eternal in the human breast: 95

Man never Is, but always To be blest:

COM M E N T A R Y.

And, in the fourth epistle, he shews, how the same HOPE is a *proof* of a future state, from the consideration of God's giving man no appetite in vain, or what he did not intend should be satisfied;

- “ He sees, why Nature plants in Man alone
- “ Hope of known blifs, and Faith in blifs unknown:
- “ Nature, whose dictates to no other kind
- “ Are giv'n in vain, but what they seek they find)

It is only for the *good man*, he tells us, that *Hope* leads from goal to goal, &c. It would then, be strange indeed, if it should prove an illusion.

N O T E S.

be set right, yet this view of things, representing God as suffering disorders for no other end than to set them right, gives us too low an idea of the divine wisdom. But if those evils (according to the *system of the best*) contribute to the greater perfection of the Whole; such a reason may be then given for their permission, as supports our idea of divine wisdom to the highest religious purposes. Then, as to the good man's *hopes* of a retribution, these still remain in their original force: For our idea of God's justice; and how far that justice is engaged to a retribution, is exactly and invariably the same on either hypothesis. For though the *system of the best* supposes that the *evils themselves* will be fully compensated by the good they produce to the *Whole*, yet this is so far from supposing that *Particulars* shall suffer for a *general good*, that it is essential to *this system*, that, at the completion of things, when the Whole is arrived to the state of utmost perfection, *particular* and *universal* good shall coincide.

The soul, uneasy, and confin'd from home,
Rests and expatiates in a life to come.

Lo, the poor Indian! whose untutor'd mind
Sees God in clouds, or hears him in the wind; 100

COMMENTARY.

VER. 99. *Lo, the poor Indian, &c.*] The Poet, as we said, having bid Man comfort himself with expectation of future happiness,—having shewn him that this HOPE is an earnest of it, and put in one very necessary caution,

“ Hope *humbly* then, with *trembling* pinions soar;
provoked at those miscreants whom he afterwards (Ep. iii. *¶* 263.) describes as building *Hell on spite, and Heaven on pride*, he upbraids them (from *¶* 99 to 112.) with the example of the poor Indian, to whom also Nature hath given this *common* HOPE of *Mankind*: But, tho' his untutored mind had betrayed him into many childish fancies concerning the nature of that future state, yet he is so far from excluding any part of his own species (a vice which could proceed only from the *pride* of false Science) that he humanely admits even his *faithful dog to bear him company*.

NOTES.

“ Such is the World's great harmony, that springs

“ From Order, Union, full Consent of things.

“ Where *small* and *great*, where *weak* and *mighty*, made

“ To *serve*, not *suffer*, *strengthen*, not *invade*, &c.

Ep. iii. *¶* 295.

Which coincidence can never be, without a retribution to good men for the evils suffered here below.

VER. 97.—*from home*.] The construction is,—The soul *being* from home (confined and uneasy) expatiates, &c. By which words, it was the poet's purpose to teach, that the present life is only a state of probation for another, more suitable to the essence of the soul, and to the free exercise of it's qualities.

His soul, proud Science never taught to stray
 Far as the solar walk, or milky way;
 Yet simple Nature to his hope has giv'n,
 Behind the cloud-topt hill, an humbler heav'n;
 Some safer world in depth of woods embrac'd, 105
 Some happier island in the watry waste,
 Where slaves once more their native land behold,
 No fiends torment, no Christians thirst for gold.
 To Be, contents his natural desire,
 He asks no Angel's wing, no Seraph's fire; 110
 But thinks, admitted to that equal sky,
 His faithful dog shall bear him company.

IV. Go, wiser thou! and, in thy scale of sense,
 Weigh thy Opinion against Providence;

VARIATIONS.

After *✓* 108. in the first Ed.

But does he say the maker is not good,
 Till he's exalted to what state he wou'd :
 Himself alone high Heav'n's peculiar care,
 Alone made happy when he will, and where?

COMMENTARY.

VER. 113. *Go, wiser thou, &c.*] He proceeds with these accusers of providence (from *✓* 112 to 122.) and

NOTES.

VER. 110. *He asks no Angel's wing, no Seraph's fire;*] The French Translator, M. l' Abbé Du Resnel, has turned the line thus,

“ Il ne desire point cette celeste flame

“ Qui des purs Seraphins devore, et nourrit l'ame.

Call imperfection what thou fancy'st such, 115
 Say, here he gives too little, there too much:
 Destroy all creatures for thy sport or gust,
 Yet cry, If Man's unhappy, God's unjust;
 If Man alone ingross not Heav'n's high care,
 Alone made perfect here, immortal there: 120
 Snatch from his hand the balance and the rod,
 Re judge his justice, be the God of God.

COMMENTARY.

shews them, that complaints against the *established order of things* begin in the *highest absurdity*, from misapplied *reason* and *power*; and end in the *highest impiety*, in an attempt to degrade the God of heaven, and to assume his place:

“ Alone made perfect here, immortal there: ”

NOTES.

i. e. *The savage does not desire that heavenly flame, which at the same time that it devours the souls of pure Seraphims, nourishes them.* On which Mr. De Croufaz (who, by the Assistance of a translation abounding in absurdities, writ a *Commentary on the Essay on Man*, in which we find nothing but absurdities) remarks, “ Mr. Pope, in exalting the fire
 “ of his poetry by an antithesis, throws occasionally his
 “ ridicule on those heavenly spirits. *The Indian*, says the
 “ poet, *contents himself without any thing of that flame, which*
 “ *devours at the same time that it nourisheth.*” *Comm.*
 p. 77. But the poet is clear of this imputation. Nothing can be more grave or sober than his English, on this occasion; nor, I dare say, to do the Translator justice, did he aim to be ridiculous. It is the sober solid Theology of the Sorbonne. Indeed had such a writer as Mr. Pope

In Pride, in reas'ning Pride, our error lies;
 All quit their sphere, and rush into the skies.
 Pride still is aiming at the blest abodes, 125
 Men would be Angels, Angels would be Gods.
 Aspiring to be Gods, if Angels fell,
 Aspiring to be Angels, Men rebel:
 And who but wishes to invert the laws
 Of ORDER, sins against th' Eternal Cause. 130

COMMENTARY.

That is, be made God, *who only is perfect, and hath immortality*: To which sense the lines immediately following confine us;

“ Snatch from his hand the balance and the rod,
 “ Re-judge his justice, be the God of God.

VER. 123. *In Pride, in reas'ning Pride, our error lies; &c.*] From these men, the Poet now turns to his friend; and (from *vs* 123 to 130.) remarks, that the ground of all this extravagance is *Pride*; which, more or less, infects the whole Species; shews the ill effects of it, in the case of the fallen Angels; and observes, that *even* wishing to invert the laws of Order, is a lower species of their crime: then brings an instance of one of the effects of Pride, which is the folly of thinking every thing made *solely* for

NOTES.

used this School-jargon, we might have suspected that he was not so serious as he should be.—The Reader, as he goes along, will see more of this Translator's excellencies. And the conclusion of the Commentary on the fourth Epistle will shew why I have been so careful to preserve them.

V. Ask for what end the heav'nly bodies shine,
 Earth for whose use? Pride answers, "'Tis for mine:
 " For me kind Nature wakes her genial pow'r,
 " Suckles each herb, and spreads out ev'ry flow'r;
 " Annual for me, the grape, the rose renew, 135
 " The juice nectareous, and the balmy dew;
 " For me, the mine a thousand treasures brings;
 " For me, health gushes from a thousand springs;
 " Seas roll to waft me, suns to light me rise;
 " My foot-stool earth, my canopy the skies." 140

COMMENTARY.

the use of Man: without the least regard to any other of God's creatures:

" Ask for what end the heav'nly bodies shine, &c.

The ridicule of imagining the *greater portions* of the material system to be solely for the use of Man, Philosophy has sufficiently exposed: And Common-sense, as the Poet observes, instructs us to conclude, that our fellow-creatures, placed by Providence as the joint-inhabitants of this Globe, are designed to be joint-sharers with us of its blessings:

" Has God, thou fool! work'd solely for *thy* good,
 " *Thy* joy, *thy* pastime, *thy* attire, *thy* food?
 " Who for *thy* table feeds the wanton fawn,
 " For *him* as kindly spreads the flow'ry lawn.

Ep. iii. v. 27.

NOTES.

VER. 131. *Ask for what end, &c.*] If there be any fault in these lines, it is not in the general sentiment, but in the ill choice of instances made use of in expressing it.—It is the highest absurdity to think that *Earth* is man's *foot-stool*, his *canopy the Skies*, and the *heavenly bodies* lighted up principally for his use; yet surely, not so, to suppose fruits and minerals given for this end.

But errs not Nature from this gracious end,
 From burning suns when livid deaths descend,
 When earthquakes swallow, or when tempests sweep
 Towns to one grave, whole nations to the deep?
 “No (’tis reply’d) the first Almighty Cause 145
 “Acts not by partial, but by gen’ral laws;
 “Th’ exceptions few; some change since all began:
 “And what created perfect?”—Why then Man?

COMMENTARY.

VER. 141. *But errs not Nature from this gracious end,*] The author comes next to the confirmation of his Thesis, That *partial moral Evil is universal Good*; but introduceth it with a proper argument, to abate our wonder at the phenomenon of moral Evil; which argument he builds on a concession of his adversaries: If we ask you, says he, (from *ψ* 140 to 150.) whether Nature doth not err from the gracious purpose of its Creator, when plagues, earthquakes, and tempests unpeople whole regions at a time; you readily answer, No. For that God acts by general, and not by particular laws, and that the course of matter and motion must be necessarily subject to some irregularities, because nothing is created perfect. I then ask why you should expect this perfection in Man? If you own that the *great end* of God (notwithstanding all this deviation) be *general happiness*, then ’tis *Nature*, and not God, that deviates; and do you expect greater constancy in Man?

“Then Nature deviates; and can Man do less?”

That is, if Nature, or the inanimate system (on which God hath imposed his laws, which obeys as a machine obeys the hand of the workman) may in course of time deviate from its first direction, as the best philosophy shews it may; where is the wonder that Man, who was created a free Agent, and hath it in his power every moment to

If the great end be human Happiness,
 Then Nature deviates; and can Man do less? 150
 As much that end a constant course requires
 Of show'rs and sun-shine, as of Man's desires;
 As much eternal springs and cloudless skies,
 As Men for ever temp'rate, calm, and wise.

COMMENTARY.

transgress the eternal rule of Right, should sometimes go out of Order?

VER. 151. *As much that end, &c.*] Having thus shewn how moral evil came into the world, namely, by *Man's abuse of his own free will*; our Poet comes to the point, the confirmation of his thesis, by shewing how *moral* evil promotes good; and employs the *same* concessions of his adversaries, concerning *natural* evil, to illustrate it.

1. He shews it tends to the *good* of the *Whole*, or *Universe* (from v 151 to 164.) and this by analogy. You own, says he, that storms and tempests, clouds, rain, heat, and variety of seasons are necessary (notwithstanding the accidental evil they bring with them) to the health and plenty of *this Globe*; why then should you suppose there is not the same use, with regard to the *Universe*, in a Borgia or a

NOTES.

VER. 150. *Then Nature deviates, &c.*] “ While comets
 “ move in very eccentric orbs, in all manner of positions,
 “ blind Fate could never make all the planets move one
 “ and the same way in orbs concentric; some inconsider-
 “ able irregularities excepted, which may have risen from
 “ the mutual actions of comets and planets upon one ano-
 “ ther, and which will be apt to increase, 'till this sy-
 “ stem wants a reformation.” *Sir Isaac Newton's Optics,*
Quæst. ult.

If plagues or earthquakes break not Heav'n's design,
Why then a Borgia, or a Catiline? 156

COMMENTARY.

Catiline? But you say you can see the one and not the other. You say right: one terminates in this *system*, the other refers to the *Whole*: which *Whole* can be comprehended by none but the great Author himself. For, says the Poet in another place,

—“ of this Frame, the bearings, and the ties,
“ The strong connections, nice dependencies,
“ Gradations just, has thy pervading soul
“ Look'd thro' ? or can a *part* contain the *whole* ?

Ver. 29, & seq.

Own therefore, says he, that

“ From Pride, our very Reas'ning springs;
“ Account for *moral*, as for *nat'ral* things:
“ Why charge we Heav'n in those, in these acquit ?
“ In both, to *reason right* is to *submit*.

NOTES.

VER. 155. *If plagues, &c.*] What hath misled some persons in this passage, is their supposing the comparison to be between the effects of *two things in this sublunary world*; when not only the elegancy, but the justness of it, consists in its being between the effects of a thing in the *universe at large*, and the familiar and known effects of one in *this sublunary world*. For the position inforced in these lines is this, that *partial evil tends to the good of the whole*:

“ Respecting Man, whatever wrong we call,
“ May, must be right, as relative to all. X 51.

How does the poet inforce it? if you will believe these Critics, in illustrating the effects of partial moral evil in a particular system, by that of partial natural evil in the *same* system, and so he leaves his *position* in the lurch,

Who knows but he, whose hand the light'ning forms,
 Who heaves old Ocean, and who wings the storms;
 Pours fierce Ambition in a Cæsar's mind, 159
 Or turns young Ammon loose to scourge mankind?
 From pride, from pride, our very reas'ning springs;
 Account for moral, as for nat'ral things:
 Why charge we Heav'n in those, in these acquit?
 In both, to reason right is to submit.

Better for Us, perhaps, it might appear, 165
 Were there all harmony, all virtue here;

C O M M E N T A R Y.

VER. 165. *Better for Us, &c.*] But, secondly, to strengthen the foregoing *analogical* argument, and to make the wisdom and goodness of God still more apparent, he

N O T E S.

But the poet reasons at another rate: The way to prove his point, he knew, was to illustrate the effect of partial moral evil in the *universe*, by partial natural evil in a *particular system*. Whether partial moral evil tend to the good of the Universe, being a question which, by reason of our ignorance of *many* parts of that Universe, we cannot decide, but from known effects; the rules of argument require that it be proved by *analogy*, *i. e.* setting it by, and comparing it with, a thing *clear and certain*; and it is a thing *clear and certain*, that partial natural evil tends to the good of our *particular system*.

VER. 157. *Who knows but he, &c.*] The sublimity with which the great Author of Nature is here characterised, is but the second beauty of this fine passage. The greatest is the making the very dispensation objected to, the periphrasis of his Title.

That never air or ocean felt the wind ;

That never passion discompos'd the mind.

COMMENTARY.

observes (from *ŷ* 165 to 172.) that *moral evil* is not only productive of *good* to the *Whole*, but is even productive of *good in our own system*. It might, says he, perhaps, appear better to us, that there were nothing in this world but *peace and virtue*:

“ That never air or ocean felt the wind ;

“ That never passion discompos'd the mind.

But then consider, that as our *material system* is supported by the strife of its elementary particles ; so is our *intellectual system* by the conflict of our Passions, which are the elements of human action.

In a word, as without the benefit of tempestuous winds, both air and ocean would stagnate, corrupt, and spread universal contagion throughout all the ranks of animals that inhabit, or are supported by, them ; so, without the benefit of the Passions, such Virtue as was merely the effect of the absence of those Passions, would be a lifeless calm, a stoical Apathy:

“ Contracted all, retiring to the breast:

“ But health of Mind is *Exercise*, not *Rest*.

Ep. ii. *ŷ* 103.

Therefore, instead of regarding the conflict of the elements, and the Passions of the mind as disorders, you ought to consider them as part of the *general order* of Providence: And that they are so, appears from their always preserving the same unvaried course, throughout all ages, from the creation to the present time:

“ The *gen'ral order*, since the Whole began,

“ Is kept in *Nature*, and is kept in *Man*.

We see, therefore, it would be doing great injustice to our author to suspect that he intended, by this, to give any encouragement to Vice. His system, as all his *Ethic Epistles* shew, is this: That the *Passions*, for the reasons given above, are necessary to the support of Virtue;

But ALL subsists by elemental strife ;

And passions are the elements of Life.

170

The gen'ral ORDER, since the whole began,

Is kept in Nature, and is kept in Man.

COMMENTARY.

That, indeed, the Passions in excess produce Vice, which is, in its own Nature, the greatest of all Evils, and comes into the world from the abuse of Man's free-will; but that God, in his infinite wisdom and goodness, deviously turns the natural bias of its malignity to the advancement of human happiness, and makes it productive of general Good:

TH' ETERNAL ART EDUCES GOOD FROM ILL.

Ep. ii. v 175.

This, set against what we have observed of the Poet's doctrine of a *future State*, will furnish us with an instance of his *steering* (as he well expresses it in his preface) *between doctrines seemingly opposite: If his Essay has any merit, he thinks it is in this.* And doubtless it is uncommon merit to reject the visions and absurdities of every System, and take in what is rational and real.

The CHARACTERISTICS and the FABLE OF THE BEES are two seemingly inconsistent systems; the extravagancy of the first is in giving a scheme of *Virtue without Religion*; and of the latter, in giving a scheme of *Religion without Virtue*. These our Poet leaves to Any that will take them up; but agrees however so far with the first, that "Virtue would be worth having, though itself was its only reward;" and so far with the latter, that "God makes Evil, against its nature, productive of Good."

NOTES.

VER. 169. *But all subsists, &c.*] See this subject extended in Ep. ii. from v 90 to 112, 155, &c.

VI. What would this Man? Now upward will he
 soar,

And little less than Angels, would be more;
 Now looking downwards, just as griev'd appears 175
 To want the strength of bulls, the fur of bears.
 Made for his use all creatures if he call,
 Say, what their use, had he the pow'rs of all;
 Nature to these, without profusion, kind,
 The proper organs, proper pow'rs assign'd; 180

COMMENTARY.

VER. 173. *What would this Man? &c.*] Having thus justified Providence in its *permission* of partial MORAL EVIL, our Author employs the remaining part of his Epistle in vindicating it from the imputation of certain supposed NATURAL EVILS. For now he shews (from ψ 172 to 207.) that though the complaint of his adversaries against Providence be on pretence of *real moral evils*; yet, at bottom, it all proceeds from their impatience under *imaginary natural ones*, the issue of a depraved appetite for visionary advantages, which if Man had, they would be either *useless* or *pernicious* to him, as repugnant to his state, or unsuitable to his condition. Though God (says he) hath so bountifully bestowed, on Man, Faculties little less than *angelic*, yet he ungratefully grasps at higher; and then, extravagant in another extreme, with a passion as ridiculous as that is impious, envies as advantages, even the peculiar accommodations of *brutes*. But here his own principles shew his folly. He supposes them all made

NOTES.

VER. 174. *And little less than Angels, &c.*] *Thou hast made him a little lower than the Angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour, Psalm viii. 9.*

Each seeming want compensated of course,
 Here with degrees of swiftness, there of force;
 All in exact proportion to the state;
 Nothing to add, and nothing to abate.

Each beast, each insect, happy in its own: 185

Is Heav'n unkind to Man, and Man alone?

Shall he alone, whom rational we call,

Be pleas'd with nothing, if not bless'd with all?

The bliss of Man (could Pride that blessing find)

Is not to act or think beyond mankind; 190

No pow'rs of body or of soul to share,

But what his nature and his state can bear.

COMMENTARY.

for his use: Now what use could he have of them, when he had robbed them of all their qualities? Qualities, distributed with the highest wisdom, as they are divided at present; but which, if bestowed according to the froward humour of these childish complainers, would be found to be, every where, either *wanting* or *superfluous*. But even with these brutal qualities, Man would not only be no gainer, but a considerable loser; as the Poet shews, in explaining the consequences which would follow from his having his sensations in that exquisite degree, in which this or the other animal is observed to possess them.

NOTES.

VER. 182. *Here with degrees of swiftness, &c.*] It is a certain axiom in the anatomy of creatures, that in proportion as they are formed for strength, their swiftness is lessened; or as they are formed for swiftness, their strength is abated. P.

Why has not Man a microscopic eye?
 For this plain reason, man is not a Fly.
 Say what the use, were finer optics giv'n, 195
 T' inspect a mite, not comprehend the heav'n?
 Or touch, if tremblingly alive all o'er,
 To smart and agonize at ev'ry pore?
 Or quick effluvia darting thro' the brain,
 Die of a rose in aromatic pain? 200
 If nature thunder'd in his op'ning ears,
 And stunn'd him with the music of the spheres,
 How would he wish that Heav'n had left him still
 The whisp'ring Zephyr, and the purling rill?
 Who finds not Providence all good and wise, 205
 Alike in what it gives, and what denies?

VII. Far as Creation's ample range extends,
 The scale of sensual, mental pow'rs ascends:

COMMENTARY.

VER. 207. *Far as Creation's ample rage extends,*] He tells us next (from *ψ* 206 to 233) that the complying with such extravagant desires would not only be useless and pernicious to Man, but would be breaking into the order, and deforming the beauty of God's Creation, in which *this* animal is subject to *that*, and every one to Man; who by his Reason enjoys the sum of all their powers.

NOTES.

VER. 202. *Stunn'd him with the music of the spheres,*] This instance is poetical and even sublime, but misplaced. He is arguing philosophically in a case that required him to employ the *real* objects of sense only: and, what is

Mark how it mounts, to Man's imperial race,
 From the green myriads in the peopled grass: 210
 What modes of fight betwixt each wide extreme,
 The mole's dim curtain, and the lynx's beam:

NOTES.

worse, he speaks of this as a *real* object.—If NATURE *thunder'd*, &c. The case is different where (in *ψ* 253.) he speaks of the motion of the heavenly bodies under the sublime conception of *ruling Angels*: For whether there be *ruling Angels* or no, there is real *motion*, which was all his argument wanted; but if there be no *music of the spheres*, there was no real *sound*, which his argument was obliged to find.

VER. 209. *Mark how it mounts, to Man's imperial race,*] M. Du Resnel has turned the latter part of the line thus,

“Jusqu'à l'Homme, ce chef, ce Roy de l'Univers.

“Even to man this Head, this *King of the Universe*,” which is so sad a blunder that it contradicts the Poet's peculiar System; who, altho' he allows *Man* to be King of this inferior world, yet he thinks it madness to make him *King of the Universe*. If the philosophy of the Poem could not teach him this, yet methinks the Poet's own words, in this very Epistle, might have prevented his mistake,

“So man who here seems *Principal* alone,

“Perhaps acts *Second* to some sphere unknown.

If the Translator imagined that Mr. Pope was speaking ironically where he talks, of *Man's imperial race*, and so would heighten the ridicule of the original by, *ce Roy de l'Univers*, the mistake is still worse; for the force of the argument depends upon it's being said seriously; the Poet being here speaking of a scale from the highest to the lowest in the mundane System.

Of smell, the headlong lioness between,
 And hound sagacious on the tainted green:
 Of hearing, from the life that fills the flood, 215
 To that which warbles thro' the vernal wood?
 The spider's touch, how exquisitely fine!
 Feels at each thread, and lives along the line:
 In the nice bee, what sense so subtly true
 From pois'nous herbs extracts the healing dew? 220
 How Instinct varies in the grov'ling swine,
 Compar'd, half-reas'ning elephant with thine!
 'Twixt that, and Reason, what a nice barrier?
 For ever sep'rate, yet for ever near!
 Remembrance and Reflection how ally'd; 225
 What thin partitions Sense from Thought divide?

NOTES.

VER. 213. *The headlong lioness*] The manner of the lions hunting their prey in the deserts of Africa is this: At their first going out in the night-time they set up a loud roar, and then listen to the noise made by the beasts in their flight, pursuing them by the ear, and not by the nostril. It is probable the story of the jackal's hunting for the lion, was occasioned by observation of this defect of scent in that terrible animal. P.

VER. 224. *For ever sep'rate, &c.*] *Near*, by the similitude of the operations; *separate*, by the immense difference in the nature of the powers.

VER. 226. *What thin partitions, &c.*] So *thin*, that the Atheistic philosophers, as Protagoras, held that *thought was only sense*; and from thence concluded, that *every imagination or opinion of every man was true*: Πᾶσα φαντασία ἐστὶν ἀλήθεια. But the poet determines more philosophically;

And Middle natures, how they long to join,
Yet never pass th' insuperable line!

Without this just gradation, could they be
Subjected, these to those, or all to thee? 230

The pow'rs of all subdu'd by thee alone,
Is not thy Reason all these pow'rs in one?

VIII. See, thro' this air, this ocean, and this earth,
All matter quick, and bursting into birth.

COMMENTARY.

VER. 233. *See, thro' this air, &c.*] And further (from
ψ 232 to 267.) that this breaking the order of things,
which, as a link or chain, connects all beings from the
highest to the lowest, would unavoidably be attended with
the destruction of the Universe: For that the several parts
of it must at least compose as entire and harmonious a
Whole, as the parts of a human body, can be doubted
by no one in his senses: Yet we see what confusion it
would make in our frame, if the members were set upon
invading each other's office:

What if the Foot, &c.] ψ 259, &c.

NOTES.

that they are really and essentially different, how *thin* so-
ever the partition is by which they are *divided*. Thus (to
illustrate the truth of this observation) when a geometer
considers a triangle, in order to demonstrate the equality
of its three angles to two right ones, he has the picture
or image of some sensible triangle in his mind, which is
sense; yet notwithstanding, he must needs have the notion
or idea of an intellectual triangle likewise, which is *thought*;
for this plain reason, because every image or picture of a
triangle must needs be obtusangular, or rectangular, or acut-
angular; but that which, in his mind, is the subject of his
proposition is the ratio of a triangle, *undetermined* to any

Above, how high, progressive life may go! 235
 Around, how wide! how deep extend below!
 Vast chain of Being! which from God began,
 Natures æthereal, human, angel, man,
 Beast, bird, fish, insect, what no eye can see,
 No glass can reach; from infinite to thee, 240
 From thee to Nothing.—On superior pow'rs
 Were we to press, inferior might on ours:
 Or in the full creation leave a void,
 Where, one step broken, the great scale's destroy'd:

VARIATIONS.

VER. 238. Ed. 1st.

Ethereal essence, spirit, substance, man.

COMMENTARY.

Who will not acknowledge, therefore, that a connection, in the disposition of things, so harmonious as here described, is transcendently beautiful? But the Fatalists suppose such an one.—What then? Is the First Free Agent, the great Cause of all things, debarred a contrivance infinitely exquisite, because some Men, to set up their idol, Fate, absurdly represent it as presiding over such a system?

NOTES.

of these species. On this account it was that Aristotle said, Νοήματα τινι διοίσει, τῇ μὴ φαντάσματά εἶναι, ἢ εἰδὲ ταῦτα φαντάσματα, ἀλλ' ἐκ ἀνευ φαντασμάτων. *The conceptions of the mind differ somewhat from sensible images; they are not sensible images, and yet not quite free or disengaged from sensible images.*

VER. 243. *Or in the full creation leave a void, &c.]* This is only an illustration from the Peripatetic *plenum* and *vacuum*: the *full* and *void* here meant, relating not to Matter, but to Life.

EP. I. ESSAY ON MAN. 33

From Nature's chain whatever link you strike, 245
Tenth, or ten thousandth, breaks the chain alike.

And, if each system in gradation roll
Alike essential to th' amazing Whole,
The least confusion but in one, not all
That system only, but the Whole must fall. 250
Let Earth unbalanc'd from her orbit fly,
Planets and Suns run lawless thro' the sky;
Let ruling Angels from their spheres be hurl'd,
Being on Being wreck'd, and world on world;
Heav'n's whole foundations to their centre nod, 255
And Nature trembles to the throne of God.
All this dread ORDER break—for whom? for thee?
Vile worm!—oh Madness! Pride! Impiety!

NOTES.

VER. 247. *And, if each system in gradation roll*] The verb is exactly chosen, as not only alluding to the *motion* of the planetary bodies of each system; but to the *figures* described by that motion.

VER. 251. *Let earth unbalanc'd*] *i. e.* Being no longer kept within its orbit by the different directions of its progressive and attractive motions; which, like equal weights in a balance, keep it in an equilibrium.

VER. 253. *Let ruling Angels, &c.*] The Poet, throughout this Work has, with great art, used an advantage which his employing a *Platonic* principle for the foundation of his Essay, had afforded him; and that is the expressing himself (as here) in *Platonic* language; which, luckily for his purpose, is highly poetical, at the same time that it adds a grace to the uniformity of his reasoning.

IX. What if the foot, ordain'd the dust to tread,
Or hand, to toil, aspir'd to be the head? 260

What if the head, the eye, or ear repin'd

To serve mere engines to the ruling Mind?

Just as absurd for any part to claim

To be another, in this gen'ral frame:

Just as absurd, to mourn the tasks or pains, 265

The great directing MIND of ALL ordains.

All are but parts of one stupendous whole,

Whose body Nature is, and God the soul;

COMMENTARY.

VER. 267. *All are but parts of one stupendous whole,*] Our Author having thus given a representation of God's Work, as *one entire whole*, where all the parts have a necessary dependence on, and relation to each other, and where each particular part works and concurs to the perfection of the Whole; as such a system transcends vulgar ideas; to reconcile it to common conceptions, he shews (from v 266 to 281.) that God is equally and intimately present to every sort of *substance*, to every particle of *mat-*

NOTES.

VER. 259. *What if the foot, &c.*] This fine illustration in defence of the *System of Nature*, is taken from St. Paul, who employed it to defend the *System of Grace*.

VER. 265. *Just as absurd, &c.*] See the prosecution and application of this in Ep iv. P.

VER. 266. *The great directing Mind, &c.*] “Veneramur
“autem & colimus ob dominium. Deus enim sine do-
“minio, providentia, & causis finalibus, nihil aliud est
“quam FATUM & NATURA.” *Newtoni Princip. Schol.*
gener. sub finem.

VER. 268. *Whose body Nature is, &c.*] A certain Examiner remarks, on this line, that, “A Spinozist would

That, chang'd thro' all, and yet in all the same;
Great in the earth, as in th' æthereal frame; 270

COMMENTARY.

ter, and in every instant of *being*; which eases the labouring imagination, and makes us expect no less, from such a *Presence*, than such a *Dispensation*.

NOTES.

“express himself in this Manner.” I believe he would, and so, we know, would St. Paul too, when writing on the same subject, namely the omnipresence of God in his Providence, and in his Substance. *In him we live, and move, and have our being*; i. e. we are parts of him, *his offspring*, as the Greek poet, a pantheist quoted by the Apostle, observes: And the reason is, because a religious theist and an impious pantheist both profess to believe the omnipresence of God. But would Spinoza, as Mr. Pope does, call God *the great directing Mind of all*, who hath intentionally created a perfect Universe? Or would a Spinozist have told us,

“The workman from the work distinct was known,
a line that overtunes all Spinozism from its very foundations.

But this sublime description of the Godhead contains not only the *divinity* of St. Paul; but, if that will not satisfy the men he writes against, the *philosophy* likewise of Sir Isaac Newton.

The Poet says,

“All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
“Whose body Nature is, and God the soul,
“That, chang'd thro' all, and yet in all the same,
“Great in the earth, as in th' æthereal frame,
“Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,
“Glow in the stars, and blossoms in the trees,
“Lives thro' all life, extends thro' all extent,
“Spreads undivided, operates unspent.

The Philosopher:—“In ipso continentur & moventur uni-

Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,
Glow in the stars, and blossoms in the trees,

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“ versa, sed absque mutua passione. Deus nihil patitur
“ ex corporum motibus ; illa nullam sentiunt resistantiam
“ ex omnipræsentia Dei.—Corpore omni & figura corpo-
“ rea destituitur.--Omnia regit & omnia cognoscit.--Cum
“ unaquæque Spatii particula sit semper, & unumquodque
“ Durationis indivisibile momentum, ubique certe rerum
“ omnium Fabricator ac Dominus non erit nunquam, nus-
“ quam.”

Mr. Pope ;

“ Breathes in our soul, informs our mortal part,
“ As full, as perfect, in a hair, as heart ;
“ As full, as perfect, in vile Man that mourns,
“ As the rapt Seraph that adores and burns :
“ To him no high, no low, no great, no small ;
“ He fills, he bounds, connects, and equals all.

Sir Isaac Newton :—“ Annon ex phænomenis constat esse
“ entem incorporeum, viventem, intelligentem, omnipræ-
“ sentem, qui in spatio infinito, tanquam sensorio suo, res
“ ipsas intime cernat, penitusque perspiciat, totasque intra
“ se præsens præsentis complectatur.”

But now admitting, there was an ambiguity in these expressions, so great, that a Spinozist might employ them to express his own particular principles ; and such a thing might well be, because the Spinozists, in order to hide the impiety of their principle, are wont to express the Omnipresence of God in terms that any religious Theist might employ ; in this case, I say, how are we to judge of the Poet's meaning ? Surely by the whole tenor of his argument. Now take the words in the sense of the Spinozists, and he is made, in the conclusion of his epistle, to overthrow all he has been advancing throughout the body of it : For Spinozism is the destruction of an Universe, where every thing tends, by a foreseen contrivance in all its parts, to the perfection of the Whole. But allow him to em-

Lives thro' all life, extends thro' all extent,
 Spreads undivided, operates unspent;
 Breathes in our soul, informs our mortal part, 275
 As full, as perfect, in a hair as heart;
 As full, as perfect, in vile Man that mourns,
 As the rapt Seraph that adores and burns:

N O T E S.

ploy the passage in the sense of St. Paul, *That we and all creatures live, and move, and have our being in God*; and then it will be seen to be the most logical support of all that had preceded. For the poet having, as we say, laboured through his epistle to prove, that every thing in the Universe tends, by a foreseen contrivance, and a present direction of all its parts, to the perfection of the Whole; it might be objected, that such a disposition of things implying in God a painful, operose, and inconceivable extent of Providence, it could not be supposed that such care extended to *all*, but was confined to the more noble parts of the creation. This gross conception of the First Cause the poet exposes, by shewing that God is equally and intimately present to every particle of Matter, to every sort of Substance, and in every instant of Being.

VER. 277. *As full as perfect in vile Man that mourns,
 As the rapt Seraph that adores and burns.*]

Which M. Du Resnel translates thus,

“ Dans un homme ignoré sous une humble Chaumiere,
 “ Que dans le Seraphin, rayonnant de lumiere.

i. e. *As well in the ignorant man, who inhabits an humble Cottage, as in the Seraphim encompassed with rays of light.* The Translator in good earnest thought, that a *vile man that mourn'd* could be no other than some poor Country Cottager. Which has betrayed M. de Croufaz into this important remark.—“ For all that, we sometimes find in
 “ persons of the lowest rank, a fund of probity and re-
 “ signation which preserves them from contempt; their

To him no high, no low, no great, no small;
 He fills, he bounds, connects, and equals all. 280

X. Cease then, nor ORDER Imperfection name:
 Our proper blifs depends on what we blame.

V A R I A T I O N S.

After *ŷ* 282. in the MS.

Reason, to think of God when she pretends,
 Begins a Cenſor, an Adorer ends.

C O M M E N T A R Y.

VER. 281. *Cease then, nor Order Imperfection name:*] And now the Poet, as he had promiſed, having *vindicated the ways of God to Man*, concludes (from *ŷ* 280 to the end) that, from what had been ſaid, it appears, that the very things we blame, contribute to our Happineſs, either as unrelated particulars, or at leaſt as parts of the univerſal ſyſtem; that our ſtate of ignorance was allotted to us out of compaſſion; that yet we have as much knowledge as is ſufficient to ſhew us that we are, and always ſhall be,

N O T E S.

“ minds are indeed but narrow, yet fitted to their ſtation,
 “ *&c.*” *Comm. p. 120.* But Mr. Pope had no ſuch childiſh idea in his head. He was here oppoſing the human ſpecies to the angelic; and ſo ſpoke of the firſt, when compared to the latter, as *vile and diſconſolate*. The force and beauty of the reflection depend upon this ſenſe; and, what is more, the propriety of it.

VER. 278. *As the rapt Seraph, &c.*] Alluding to the Name *Seraphim*, ſignifying *burners*.

VER. 294. *One truth is clear, &c.*] It will be difficult to think any caviller ſhould have objected to this concluſion; eſpecially when the author, in this very epiſtle, has himſelf thus explained it;

“ Reſpecting Man, whatever wrong we call,
 “ *May, muſt* be right, as relative to ALL.—

Know thy own point: This kind, this due degree
Of blindness, weakness, Heav'n bestows on thee.

COMMENTARY.

as blest as we can bear; for that NATURE is neither a
Stratonic chain of blind Causes and Effects,

(All Nature is but Art, unknown to thee)

nor yet the fortuitous result of *Epicurean* Atoms,

(All Chance, Direction, which thou canst not see)

as those two species of atheism supposed it; but the wonderful art and direction, unknown indeed to Man, of an all-powerful, all-wise, all-good, and free Being. And therefore, we may be assured, that the arguments brought above to prove partial moral Evil productive of universal Good, are conclusive; from whence one certain truth results, in spite of all the pride and cavils of vain Reason, THAT WHATEVER IS, IS RIGHT.

That the reader may see in one view the exactness of the Method, as well as force of the Argument, I shall here draw up a short synopsis of this Epistle. The Poet begins by telling us his subject is an Essay on Man: That his end of writing is to vindicate Providence: That he in-

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- “ So Man, who here seems *principal* alone,
- “ Perhaps acts *second* to some sphere unknown;
- “ Touches some wheel, or verges to some goal:
- “ 'Tis but a part we see, and not a whole.

But without any regard to the evidence of this illustration, there is one who exclaims: “ See the general conclusion, “ *All that is, is right.* So that at the sight of Charles the “ first losing his head on the scaffold, we must have said “ *this is right*; at the sight too of his judges condemning “ him, we must have said *this is right*; at the sight of “ some of these judges, taken and condemned for the “ action which he had owned to be right, we must have “ cried out *this is doubly right.*” Never was any thing

Submit.—In this, or any other sphere, 285

Secure to be as blest as thou canst bear:

COMMENTARY.

tends to derive his arguments, *from the visible things of God seen in this system*: Lays down this Proposition, *That of all possible systems, infinite Wisdom has form'd the best*: draws from thence two Consequences, 1. *That there must needs be somewhere such a creature as Man*; 2. *That the moral Evil which he is author of, is productive of the Good of the Whole*. This is his general Thesis; from whence he forms this Conclusion, *That Man should rest submissive and content, and make the hopes of Futurity his comfort; but not suffer this to be the occasion of PRIDE, which is the cause of all his impious complaints*.

He proceeds to confirm his Thesis.—Previously endeavours to abate our wonder at the phænomenon of *moral Evil*; shews, first, *its use to the perfection of the universe*, by analogy, from the use of *physical Evil* in this particular system.—Secondly, *its use in this system*, where it is turned, providentially, from its natural bias, to promote Virtue. Then goes on to vindicate Providence from the imputation of certain *supposed natural Evils*; as he had before justified it for the permission of *real moral Evil*, in shewing that, though the atheist's complaint against Providence be on pretence of *real moral Evil*, yet the true cause is his impatience under *imaginary natural Evil*; the issue of a *depraved appetite for fantastical advantages*, which, if obtained, would be *useless or hurtful* to Man, and deforming

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more amazing than that the absurdities arising from the sense in which this critic takes the great principle, of *whatever is, is right*, did not shew him his mistake: For could any one in his senses employ a proposition in a meaning from whence such evident absurdities *immediately* arise? I have observed, that this conclusion, *whatever is, is right*, is a consequence of these premises, that *partial*

Safe in the hand of one disposing Pow'r,
Or in the natal, or the mortal hour.

C O M M E N T A R Y.

and destructive to the Universe, as breaking into that order by which it is supported ---He describes that *order, harmony, and close connection of the parts*; and, by shewing the intimate presence of God to his whole creation, gives a reason for an Universe so amazingly beautiful and perfect. From all this he deduces his general conclusion, *That Nature being neither a blind chain of Causes and Effects, nor yet the fortuitous result of wandering atoms, but the wonderful art and direction of an all-wise, all-good, and free Being*; *WHATEVER IS, IS RIGHT, with regard to the disposition of God, and its ultimate tendency*; which once granted, all complaints against Providence are at an end.

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Evil tends to universal Good; which the author employs as a principle to humble the pride of Man, who would impiously make God accountable for his creation. What then does common sense teach us to understand by *whatever is, is right*? Did the poet mean right with regard to Man, or right with regard to God; right with regard to itself, or right with regard to its ultimate tendency? Surely *WITH REGARD TO GOD*; for he tells us his design is to *windicate the ways of God to Man*. Surely, with regard to its *ULTIMATE TENDENCY*; for he tells us again, *all partial ill is universal Good*, & 291. Now is this any encouragement to Vice? Or does it take it off from the crime of him who commits it, that God providentially produces Good out of Evil? Had Mr. Pope abruptly said in his conclusion, *the result of all is, that whatever is, is right*, the objector had even then been inexcusable for putting so absurd a sense upon the words, when he might have seen that it was a conclusion from the general principle above-mentioned; and therefore must necessarily have another meaning. But what must we think of him, when the

All Nature is but Art, unknown to thee;
 All Chance, Direction, which thou canst not see; 290
 All Discord, Harmony not understood;
 All partial Evil, universal Good:
 And, spite of Pride, in erring Reason's spite,
 One truth is clear, **WHATEVER IS, IS RIGHT.**

NOTES.

Poet, to prevent mistakes, had delivered, in this very place, the principle itself, together with this conclusion as the consequence of it;

“ All Discord, Harmony not understood;

“ *All partial Evil, universal Good:*

“ And, spite of Pride, in erring Reason's spite,

“ One truth is clear,—*Whatever Is, is Right.*

He could not have told his reader plainer that this conclusion was the consequence of that principle, unless he had written **THEREFORE** in great Church letters.

A R G U M E N T O F
E P I S T L E II.

*Of the Nature and State of Man with respect
to Himself, as an Individual.*

- I. *THE business of Man not to pry into God, but to study himself. His Middle Nature; his Powers and Frailties, § 1 to 19. The Limits of his Capacity, § 19, &c. II. The two Principles of Man, Self-love and Reason, both necessary, § 53, &c. Self-love the stronger, and why, § 67, &c. Their end the same, § 81, &c. III. The PASSIONS, and their use, § 93 to 130. The Predominant Passion, and its force, § 132 to 160. Its Necessity, in directing Men to different purposes, § 165, &c. Its providential Use, in fixing our Principle, and ascertaining our Virtue, § 177. IV. Virtue and Vice joined in our mixed Nature; the limits near, yet the things separate and evident: What is the Office of Reason, § 202 to 216. V. How odious Vice in itself, and how we deceive ourselves into it, § 217. VI. That, however, the Ends of Providence and general Good are answered in our Passions and Imperfections, § 238, &c. How usefully these are distributed to all Orders of Men, § 241. How useful they are to Society, § 251. And to Individuals, § 263. In every state, and every age of life, § 273, &c.*

E P I S T L E II.

I. **K** Now then thyself, presume not to God to scan,
 The proper study of Mankind is Man.
 Plac'd on this isthmus of a middle state,
 A Being darkly wise, and rudely great:

V A R I A T I O N S.

VER. 2. Ed. 1st.

The only science of Mankind is Man.

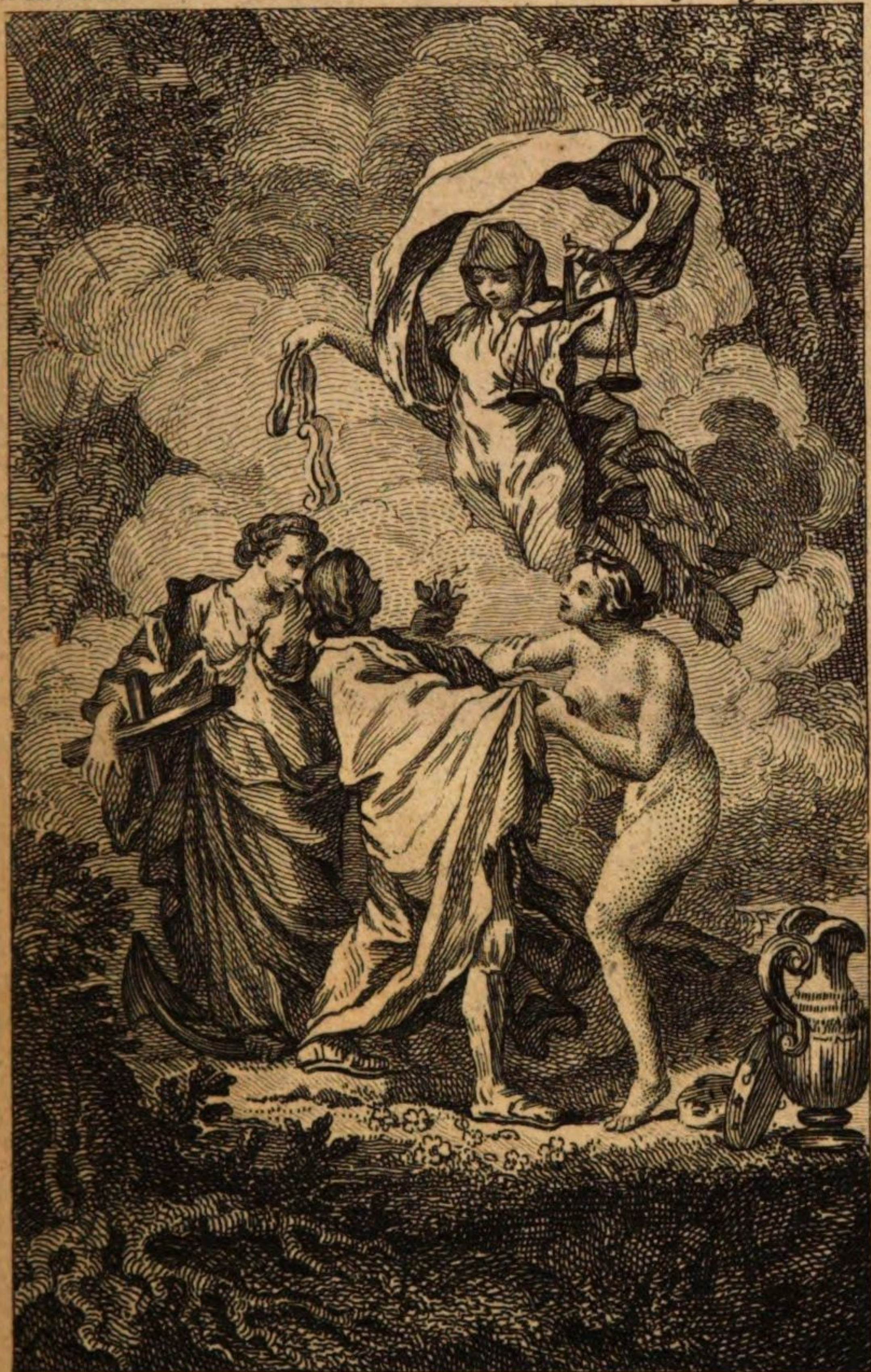
C O M M E N T A R Y.

VER. 2. *The proper study, &c.*] The Poet having shewn, in the *first* epistle, that the *ways of God* are too high for our comprehension, rightly draws this conclusion: and methodically makes it the subject of his Introduction to the *second*, which treats of the *Nature of Man*.

But here presently the accusers of Providence would be apt to object, and say, Admit that we had run into an excess, while we pretended to censure or penetrate the designs of Providence, a matter indeed too high for us; yet have not you gone as far into the opposite extreme, while you

N O T E S.

VER. 3. *Plac'd on this isthmus, &c.*] As the Poet hath given us this description of man for the very contrary purpose to what *Sceptics* are wont to employ such kind of paintings, namely, not to deter men from the search, but to excite them to the discovery of truth; he hath, with great judgment, represented Men as doubting and wavering between the *right* and *wrong* object; from which state there are great hopes he may be relieved by a careful and



*Self Love still stronger, as its Objects nigh,
Reasons at distance, and in Prospect lie;
That sees immediate Good, by present Sense
Reason the future, and the Consequence.*

Essay on Man, Ep. II.

With too much knowledge for the Sceptic side, 5
 With too much weakness for the Stoic's pride,

COMMENTARY.

only send us to the knowledge of our own Nature: You must mock us when you talk of this as a study; for who can doubt but we are intimately acquainted with OURSELVES? The proper conclusion therefore from your proof of our inability to comprehend the ways of God, is, that we should turn ourselves to the study of the frame of NATURE. Thus, I say, would they be apt to object; for, of all Men, those who call themselves *Freethinkers* are most given up to *Pride*; especially that kind of pride, which consists in a boasted knowledge of their own nature, the effects of which are so well exposed in the *first* Epistle. The Poet, therefore, to convince them that this study is less easy than they imagine, replies (from *℣* 2 to 19.) to the *first*

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circumspect use of Reason. On the contrary, had he supposed Man so blind as to be busied in chusing, or doubtful in his choice, between two objects *equally wrong*, the case had appeared desperate, and all *study of Man* had been effectually discouraged. But M. *Du Resnel*, not seeing the reason and beauty of this conduct, hath run into the very absurdity, which I have here shewn, Mr. Pope so artfully avoided. Of which, the learned Reader may take the following proofs. The Poet says

“ Man acts between; in doubt to *act*, or *rest*.

Now he tells us 'tis Man's duty to *act*, not *rest*, as the Stoics thought; and, to this their principle, the latter word alludes, whose Virtue, as he says afterwards, is

“ Fix'd as in a Frost,

“ Contracted all, retiring to the breast:

“ But strength of mind is EXERCISE NOT REST.

Now hear the Translator, who is not for mincing matters,

Seroit-il en naissant *au travail* condamné?

Aux douceurs, du repos seroit-il destiné?

He hangs between ; in doubt to act, or rest ;
In doubt to deem himself a God, or Beast ;

COMMENTARY.

part of the objection, by describing the dark and feeble state of the human Understanding, with regard to the knowledge of ourselves. And further, to strengthen this argument, he shews, in answer to the *second* part of the objection (from *ψ* 18 to 31.) that the highest advances in

NOTES.

and these are both wrong, for Man is neither condemned to *slavish Toil and Labour*, nor yet indulged in the *Luxury of repose*. The Poet says,

“ In doubt to deem himself a God or beast.

i. e. He doubts, as appears from the very next line, whether his soul be *mortal* or *immortal*; one of which is the truth, namely its *immortality*, as the Poet himself teaches, when he speaks of the Omnipresence of God :

“ Breathes in our *Soul*, informs our *mortal* part.

Ep. i. *ψ* 275.

The Translator, as we say, unconscious of the Poet's purpose, rambles as before,

“ Tantôt de son esprit admirant l'excellence,

“ Il pense qu'il est Dieu, qu'il en a la puissance ;

“ Et tantôt gemissant des besoins de son corps,

“ Il croit que de la brute, il n'a que les RESORTS.

Here his head, turned to a sceptical view, was running on the different extravagances of Plato in his Theology, and of Des Cartes in his Philosophy. Sometimes, says he, Man believes himself a *real God*; and sometimes again, a *mere Machine*: things quite out of the Poet's thought in this place. Again, the Poet, in a beautiful allusion to Scripture sentiments, breaks out into this just and moral reflection on man's condition here,

“ Born but to die, and reas'ning but to err.

In doubt his Mind or Body to prefer;
 Born but to die, and reas'ning but to err, 10
 Alike in ignorance, his reason such,
 Whether he thinks too little, or too much:

COMMENTARY.

natural knowledge may be easily acquired, and yet we, all the while, continue very ignorant of *ourselves*. For that neither the clearest science, which results from the Newtonian philosophy, nor the most sublime, which is taught by the Platonic, will at all assist us in this self-study; nay,

NOTES.

The Translator turns this fine and sober thought into the most outrageous Scepticism;

“Ce n'est que pour mourir, qu'il est né, qui'l respire,

“Et toute sa raison n'est presque qu'un delire.

and so makes his Author directly contradict himself, where he says of Man, that he hath

—“too much knowledge for the Sceptic side.

VER. 10. *Born but to die, &c.*] The author's meaning is, that, as we are *born to die*, and yet do enjoy some small portion of life; so, though we *reason to err*, yet we comprehend some few truths. This is the weak state of Reason, in which Error mixes itself with all its true conclusions concerning Man's Nature.

VER. 11. *Alike in ignorance, &c.*] *i. e.* The proper sphere of his Reason is so narrow, and the exercise of it so nice, that the too immoderate use of it is attended with the same ignorance that proceeds from the not using it at all. Yet, tho' in both these cases, he is *abused by himself*, he has it still in his own power to *disabuse himself*, in making his Passions subservient to the *means*, and regulating his Reason by the *end* of life.

VER. 12. *Whether he thinks too little, or too much:*] This is so true, that ignorance arises as well from pushing our

Chaos of Thought and Passion, all confus'd;
 Still by himself abus'd, or disabus'd;
 Created half to rise, and half to fall; 15
 Great lord of all things, yet a prey to all;
 Sole judge of Truth, in endless Error hurl'd:
 The glory, jest, and riddle of the world!

VARIATIONS.

After *ψ* 18. in the MS.

For more perfection than this state can bear
 In vain we sigh, Heav'n made us as we are.

COMMENTARY.

what is more, that Religion itself, when grown fanatical and enthusiastic, will be equally useless: Though pure and sober Religion will best instruct us in Man's Nature; that knowledge being essential to Religion; whose subject is Man considered in all his relations, and, consequently, whose object is God.

NOTES.

enquiries too far, as from not carrying them far enough, that we may observe, when Speculations, even in Science, are carried beyond a certain point; that point, where use is reasonably supposed to end, and mere curiosity to begin; they conclude in the most extravagant and senseless inferences; such as the unreality of matter; the reality of space; the servility of the Will, &c. The reason of this sudden fall out of full light into utter darkness, seems not to result from the natural condition of things, but to be the arbitrary decree of infinite wisdom and goodness, which imposed a barrier to the extravagancies of its giddy lawless creature, always inclined to pursue truths of less importance too far, to the neglect of those more necessary for his improvement in his station here.

VER. 17. *Sole judge of Truth, in endless Error hurl'd:]*
 Some have imagined that the author, by, *in endless error*

Go, wond'rous creature! mount where Science
guides,

Go, measure earth, weigh air, and state the tides; 20

VARIATIONS.

As wisely sure a modest Ape might aim
To be like Man, whose faculties and frame
He sees, he feels, as you or I to be
An Angel thing we neither know nor see.
Observe how near he edges on our race;
What human tricks! how risible of face!

NOTES.

burl'd, meant, *cast into endless error*, or *into the regions of endless error*, and therefore have taken notice of it as an incongruity of speech. But they neither understood the Poet's language, nor his sense: to *burl* and *cast* are not synonymous; but related only as the genus and species; for to *burl* signifies, not simply to *cast*, but to *cast backward and forward*, and is taken from the rural game called *hurling*. So that, *into endless error burl'd*, as these critics would have it, would have been a barbarism. His words therefore signify, *tossed about in endless error*; and this he intended they should signify, as appears from the antithesis, *sole judge of truth*. So that the sense of the whole is,—“Tho’
“ as sole judge of truth, he is now fixed and stable; yet,
“ as involved in *endless error*, he is now again *burl'd*, or
“ tossed up and down in it.” This shews us how cautious we ought to be in censuring the expressions of a writer, one of whose characteristic qualities was correctness of expression and propriety of sentiment.

VER. 20. *Go, measure earth, &c.*] Alluding to the noble and useful labours of the modern Mathematicians, in measuring a degree at the equator and the polar circle, in order to determine the true figure of the earth; of great importance to astronomy and navigation.

Instruct the planets in what orbs to run,
 Correct old Time, and regulate the Sun;
 Go, soar with Plato, to th' empyreal sphere,
 To the first good, first perfect, and first fair;
 Or tread the mazy round his follow'rs trod, 25
 And quitting sense call imitating God;
 As Eastern priests in giddy circles run,
 And turn their heads to imitate the Sun.

VARIATIONS.

It must be so—why else have I the sense
 Of more than monkey charms and excellence?
 Why else to walk on two so oft essay'd?
 And why this ardent longing for a maid?
 So Pug might plead, and call his Gods unkind
 Till set on end and married to his mind.
 Go, reas'ning Thing! assume the Doctor's chair,
 As Plato deep, as Seneca severe:
 Fix moral fitness, and to God give rule,
 Then drop into thyself, &c.—

VER. 21. Ed. 4th and 5th.

Show by what rules the wand'ring planets stray,
 Correct old Time, and teach the Sun his Way.

NOTES.

VER. 22. *Correct old Time,*] This alludes to Sir Isaac Newton's Grecian Chronology, which he reformed on those two sublime conceptions, the difference between the reigns of kings, and the generations of men; and the position of the colures of the equinoxes and solstices at the time of the Argonautic expedition.

Montaigne

Go, teach Eternal Wisdom how to rule —
Then drop into thyself, and be a fool! 30

Superior beings, when of late they saw
A mortal Man unfold all Nature's law,

COMMENTARY.

VER. 31. *Superior beings, &c.*] To give this second argument its full force, he illustrates it (from *ψ* 30 to 43.) by the noblest example that ever was in science, the incomparable NEWTON; who, although he penetrated so far beyond others into the works of GOD, yet could go no further in the knowledge of his own nature than the generality of his fellows. Of which the Poet assigns this very just and adequate reason: In all *other sciences* the Understanding is unchecked and uncontrouled by any opposite principle; but in the science of *Man*, the Passions overturn as fast as Reason can build up.

NOTES.

VER. 29, 30. *Go, teach Eternal Wisdom, &c.*] These two lines are a conclusion from all that had been said from *ψ* 18, to this effect: Go now, vain Man, elated with thy acquirements in *real* science, and *imaginary* intimacy with God; go, and run into all the extravagancies I have exploded in the first epistle, where thou pretendest to teach Providence how to govern; then drop into the obscurities of thy own nature, and thereby manifest thy ignorance and folly.

VER. 31. *Superior beings, &c.*] In these lines the Poet speaks to this effect: But to make you fully sensible of the difficulty of this study, I shall instance in the great Newton himself; whom, when superior beings, not long since, saw capable of unfolding the whole law of Nature, they were in doubt whether the owner of such prodigious sagacity should not be reckoned of their own order; just as men, when they see the surprizing marks of Reason in an Ape, are almost tempted to rank him with their own

Admir'd such wisdom in an earthly shape,
And shew'd a NEWTON as we shew an Ape.

Could he, whose rules the rapid Comet bind, 35
Describe or fix one movement of his Mind?

VARIATIONS.

VER. 35. Ed. 1st.

Could he, who taught each Planet where to roll,
Describe or fix one movement of the Soul?
Who mark'd their points to rise or to descend,
Explain his own beginning or his end?

NOTES.

kind. And yet this wondrous Man could go no further in the knowledge of himself than the generality of his species. M. Du Resnel who understood nothing of all this, translates these four celebrated lines thus,

“ Des celestes Esprits la vive intelligence
“ Regarde avec pitié notre foible Science ;
“ Newton, le grand Newton, que nos admirons tous
“ Est peut-être pour eux, ce qu'un Singe est pour nous.

But it is not the *pity*, but the *admiration* of those celestial Spirits, which is here spoken of. And it was for no slight cause they admired; it was, *to see a mortal man unfold the whole law of nature*. By which we see it, was not Mr. Pope's intention to bring any of the Ape's *qualities*, but its *sagacity*, into the comparison. But why the *Ape's*, it may be said, rather than the sagacity of some more decent animal, particularly the *half-reasoning elephant*, as the Poet calls it; which, as well on account of this its excellence, as for its having no ridiculous side, like the Ape, on which it could be viewed, seems better to have deserved this honour? I reply, Because, as a shape resembling human (which only the Ape has) must be joined with great sagacity, to raise a suspicion of the animal, thus endowed, it's

Who saw its fires here rise, and there descend,
 Explain his own beginning, or his end?
 Alas what wonder! Man's superior part
 Uncheck'd may rise, and climb from art to art; 40
 But when his own great work is but begun,
 What Reason weaves, by Passion is undone.

NOTES.

relation to man; so the spirituality, which Newton had in common with Angels, joined to a penetration superior to man, made those Beings suspect he might be one of their Order. On this ground of relation, we see the whole beauty of the thought depends.—And here let me take notice of a new species of the Sublime, of which our Poet may be justly said to be the Maker; so new, that we have yet no name for it, though of a nature distinct from every other known beauty of Poetry. The two great perfections in works of genius, are WIT and SUBLIMITY. Many writers have been witty; some have been sublime; and a few have even possessed both these qualities separately: but none, that I know of, besides our Poet, have had the art to INCORPORATE them; of which he hath given many examples, both in this Essay and his other poems; one of the noblest being the passage in question. This seems to be the last effort of the imagination to poetical perfection: and, in this compounded excellence, the Wit receives a dignity from the Sublime; and the Sublime a Splendor from the Wit; which, in their state of separate existence, they both wanted.

VER. 37. *Who saw its fires here rise, &c.*] Sir Isaac Newton, in calculating the velocity of a Comet's motion, and the course it describes, when it becomes visible in its descent to, and ascent from the Sun, conjectured, with the highest appearance of truth, that Comets revolve perpetually round the Sun, in ellipses vastly eccentric, and very nearly approaching to parabolas. In which he was greatly confirmed, in observing between two Comets a coinci-

Trace Science then, with Modesty thy guide:
 First strip off all her equipage of Pride;
 Deduct what is but Vanity, or Dress,
 Or Learning's Luxury, or Idleness;

45

COMMENTARY.

VER. 43. *Trace Science then, &c.*] The conclusion, therefore, from the whole is (from $\S$ 42 to 53.) that, as on the one hand, we should persist in the study of Nature; so, on the other, in order to arrive at Science, we should proceed in the simplicity of Truth; and then the product, tho' small, will yet be real.

NOTES.

dence in their perihelions, and a perfect agreement in their velocities.

VER. 45.—*Vanity, or Dress,*] These are the first parts of what the Poet, in the preceding line, calls the scholar's *equipage of Pride*. By *vanity*, is meant that luxuriancy of thought and expression in which a writer indulges himself, to shew the fruitfulness of his fancy or invention. By *dress*, is to be understood a lower degree of that practice, in amplification of thought and ornamental expression, to give force to what the writer would convey: but even this, the Poet, in a severe search after truth, condemns; and with great judgment. Conciseness of thought and simplicity of expression, being as well the best *instruments*, as the best *vehicles* of Truth. *Shakespeare* touches upon this latter advantage with great force and humour. The Flatterer says to *Timon* in distress, "I cannot cover the monstrous bulk of their ingratitude with any size of words." The other replies, "Let it go naked, men may see't the better."

VER. 46. *Or Learning's Luxury, or Idleness;*] The *Luxury of Learning* consists in dressing up and disguising old notions in a new way, so as to make them more fashionable and palatable; instead of examining and scrutinizing

Or tricks to shew the stretch of human brain,
 Mere curious pleasure, or ingenious pain ;
 Expunge the whole, or lop th' excrescent parts
 Of all our Vices have created Arts; 50
 Then see how little the remaining sum,
 Which serv'd the past, and must the times to come!

II. Two Principles in human nature reign;
 Self-love, to urge, and Reason, to restrain;

COMMENTARY.

VER. 53. *Two Principles, &c.*] The Poet having thus shewn the difficulty attending the study of Man, proceeds to remove it, by laying before us the elements or true principles of this science, in an account of the *Origin, Use, and End* of the PASSIONS; which, in my opinion, contains the truest, clearest, shortest, and consequently the best system of Ethics that is any where to be met with. He begins (from v 52 to 59.) with pointing out the two grand Principles in human nature, SELF-LOVE and REASON. Describes their general nature: The first sets Man upon acting, the other regulates his action. However, these

NOTES.

their truth. As this is often done for pomp and shew, it is called *luxury*; as it is often done too to save pains and labour, it is called *idleness*.

VER. 47. *Or tricks to shew the stretch of human brain,*] Such as the mathematical demonstrations concerning the *small quantity of matter*; the *endless divisibility* of it, &c.

VER. 48. *Mere curious pleasure, or ingenious pain;*] That is, when *Admiration* sets the mind on the rack.

VER. 49. *Expunge the whole, or lop th' excrescent parts—*
Of all our vices have created Arts;]

i. e. Those parts of natural Philosophy, Logic, Rhetoric, Poetry, &c. that administer to luxury, deceit, ambition, effeminacy, &c.

Nor this a good, nor that a bad we call, 55
 Each works it end, to move or govern all :
 And to their proper operation still,
 Ascribe all Good, to their improper, Ill.

Self-love, the spring of motion, acts the soul ;
 Reason's comparing balance rules the whole. 60
 Man, but for that, no action could attend,
 And, but for this, were active to no end :
 Fix'd like a plant on his peculiar spot,
 To draw nutrition, propagate, and rot ;
 Or, meteor-like, flame lawless thro' the void, 65
 Destroying others, by himself destroy'd.

Most strength the moving principle requires ;
 Active its task, it prompts, impels, inspires.

C O M M E N T A R Y .

principles are *natural*, not *moral*; and, therefore, in themselves, neither good nor bad, but so only as they are directed. This observation is made with great judgment, in opposition to the desperate folly of those Fanatics, who, as the Ascetic, pretend to eradicate Self-love; as the Mystic, would stifle Reason; and both, on the absurd fancy of their being *moral*, not *natural* principles.

VER. 59. *Self-love, the spring of motion, acts the soul ;*] The Poet proceeds (from v 58 to 67.) more minutely to mark out the distinct offices of these two Principles, which he had before assigned only in general; and here he shews their necessity; for without Self-love, as the *spring*, Man would be unactive: and without Reason, as the *balance*, active to no purpose.

VER. 67. *Most strength the moving principle requires ;*] Having thus explained the ends and offices of each Principle, he goes on (from v 66 to 79.) to speak of their qualities;

Sedate and quiet, the comparing lies,
 Form'd but to check, delib'rate, and advise. 70
 Self-love still stronger, as its objects nigh;
 Reason's at distance, and in prospect lie:
 That sees immediate good by present sense;
 Reason, the future and the consequence.
 Thicker than arguments, temptations throng, 75
 At best more watchful this, but that more strong.
 The action of the stronger to suspend
 Reason still use, to Reason still attend.
 Attention, habit and experience gains;
 Each strengthens Reason, and Self-love restrains. 80

COMMENTARY.

and shews how they are fitted to discharge those functions, and answer their respective intentions. The business of Self-love being to excite to action, it is quick and impetuous; and moving instinctively, has, like attraction, its force prodigiously increased as the object approaches, and proportionably lessened as it recedes. On the contrary, Reason, like the Author of attraction, is always calm and sedate, and equally preserves itself, whether the object be near or far off. Hence the moving principle is made more strong, though the restraining be more quick-sighted. The consequence he draws from this is, that if we would not be carried away to our destruction, we must always keep Reason upon guard.

VER. 79. *Attention, &c.*] But it would be objected, that, if this account be true, human life would be most miserable; and, even in the wisest, a perpetual conflict be-

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VER. 74. *Reason, the future and the consequence,*] i. e. By experience, Reason collects the future; and by argumentation, the consequence.

Let subtle schoolmen teach these friends to fight,
 More studious to divide than to unite;
 And Grace and Virtue, Sense and Reason split,
 With all the rash dexterity of wit.

C O M M E N T A R Y .

tween Reason and the Passions. To this, therefore, the Poet replies (from *ψ* 78 to 81.) first, that Providence has so graciously contrived, that even in the voluntary exercise of Reason, as in the mechanic motion of a limb, Habit makes what was at first done with pain, easy and natural. And, secondly, that the experience gained by the long exercise of Reason, goes a great way towards eluding the force of Self-love. Now the attending to Reason, as here recommended, will gain us this habit and experience. Hence it appears, that our station, in which Reason is to be kept constantly upon guard, is not so uneasy a one as may be at first imagined.

VER. 81. *Let subtle schoolmen, &c.*] From this description of Self-love and Reason it follows, as the Poet observes (from *ψ* 80 to 93.) that both conspire to one end, namely, human happiness, though they be not equally expert in the choice of the means; the difference being this, that the first hastily seizes every thing which hath the appearance of good; the other weighs and examines whether it be indeed what it appears.

This shews, as he next observes, the folly of the schoolmen, who consider them as two opposite principles, the one good and the other evil. The observation is seasonable and judicious; for this dangerous school-opinion gives great support to the Manichæan or Zoroastrian error, the confutation of which was one of the author's chief ends in writing. For if there be *two principles* in Man, a *good* and *bad*, it is natural to think him the joint product of the two Manichæan Deities (the first of which contributed to his *Reason*, the other to his *Passions*) rather than the creature of one Individual Cause. This was

Wits, just like Fools, at war about a name, 85

Have full as oft no meaning, or the same.

Self-love and Reason to one end aspire,

Pain their aversion, Pleasure their desire;

But greedy That, its object would devour,

This taste the honey, and not wound the flow'r: 90

Pleasure, or wrong or rightly understood,

Our greatest evil, or our greatest good.

III. Modes of Self-love the Passions we may call:

'Tis real good, or seeming, moves them all:

But since not ev'ry good we can divide. 95

And reason bids us for our own provide;

VARIATIONS.

After *✓* 86. in the MS.

Of good and evil Gods what frightened Fools,

Of good and evil Reason puzzled Schools,

Deceiv'd, deceiving, taught —

COMMENTARY.

Plutarch's opinion and, as we may see in him, of some of the more ancient theistical Philosophers. It was of importance, therefore, to reprobate and subvert a notion that served to the support of so dangerous an error: And this the Poet has done with much force and clearness.

VER. 93. *Modes of Self-love, &c.*] Having given this account of the nature of Self-love in general, he comes now to anatomize it, in a discourse on the PASSIONS, which he aptly names the *modes* of Self-love. The object of all these, he shews (from *✓* 92 to 101.) is good; and, when under the guidance of Reason, real good, either of ourselves or of Another; for some goods not being capable of division or communication, and Reason at

Passions, tho' selfish, if their means be fair,
 List under Reason, and deserve her care;
 Those, that imparted, court a nobler aim,
 Exalt their kind, and take some Virtue's name, 100
 In lazy Apathy let Stoics boast
 Their Virtue fix'd; 'tis fix'd as in a frost;
 Contracted all, retiring to the breast;
 But strength of mind is Exercise, not Rest:
 The rising tempest puts in act the soul, 105
 Parts it may ravage, but preserves the whole.
 On life's vast ocean diversely we sail,
 Reason the card, but passion is the gale;

VARIATIONS.

After y 108. in the MS.

A tedious Voyage! where how useless lies
 The compass, if no pow'rful gusts arise?

COMMENTARY.

the same time directing us to provide for ourselves, we therefore, in pursuit of these objects, sometimes aim at our own good, sometimes at the good of others: when fairly aiming at our own, the quality is called *Prudence*; when at another's, *Virtue*.

Hence (as he shews from y 100 to 105.) appears the folly of the Stoics, who would eradicate the Passions, things so necessary both to the good of the Individual and of the Kind. Which preposterous method of promoting Virtue he therefore very reasonably reprove.

VER: 105. *The rising tempest puts in act the soul,*] But as it was from observation of the evils occasioned by the passions, that the Stoics thus extravagantly projected their extirpation, the Poet recurs (from y 104 to 111.) to his

Nor God alone in the still calm we find,
He mounts the storm, and walks upon the wind. 110

COMMENTARY.

grand principle, so often before, and to so good purpose, insisted on, that *partial Ill is universal Good*; and shews, that though the tempest of the Passions, like that of the air, may tear and ravage some few parts of nature in its passage, yet the salutary agitation produced by it preserves the whole in life and vigour. This is his *first* argument against the Stoics, which he illustrates by a very beautiful similitude, on a hint taken from Scripture:

“ Nor God alone in the still calm we find,
“ He mounts the storm, and walks upon the wind.

NOTES.

VER. 109. *Nor God alone in the still calm we find,
He mounts the storm and walks upon the wind.*]

The Translator turns it thus,

“ Dieu lui-même, Dieu sort de son profond repos.

And so, makes an *Epicurean* God of the Governor of the Universe. M. De Crousaz does not spare this expression of *God's coming out of his profound repose*. “ It is, says he, “ excessively poetical, and presents us with ideas which “ we ought not to dwell upon,” &c. *Comm. p. 158.*

VER. 109. *Nor God alone, &c.*] These words are only a simple affirmation in the poetic dress of a similitude, to this purpose: Good is not only produced by the subdual of the Passions, but by the turbulent exercise of them. A truth conveyed under the most sublime imagery that poetry could conceive or paint. For the author is here only shewing the providential issue of the Passions; and how, by God's gracious disposition, they are turned away from their natural byas, to promote the happiness of Mankind. As to the method in which they are to be treated by Man, in whom they are found, all that he contends for, in favour of them, is only this, that they should not be quite

Passions, like elements, tho' born to fight,
 Yet, mix'd and soften'd, in his work unite:
 These 'tis enough to temper and employ;
 But what composes Man, can Man destroy?

VARIATIONS.

After ψ 112. in the MS.

The soft reward the virtuous, or invite;
 The fierce, the vicious punish or affright.

COMMENTARY.

VER. 111. *Passions, like elements, &c.*] His *second* argument against the Stoics (from ψ 110 to 133.) is, that Passions go to the composition of a moral character, just as elementary particles go to the composition of an organized body: Therefore, for Man to project the destruction of what composes his very Being, is the height of extravagance. 'Tis true, he tells us, that these Passions, which in their natural state, like elements, are in perpetual jar, must be tempered, softened, and united, in order to perfect the work of the great plastic Artist; who, in this office, employs human Reason; whose business it is to follow the road of Nature, and to observe the dictates of the Deity;—*Follow her and God.* The use and importance of this precept is evident: For in doing the first, she will discover the absurdity of attempting to eradicate the Passions; in doing the second, she will learn how to make them subservient to the interests of Virtue.

NOTES.

rooted up and destroyed, as the Stoics, and their followers in all Religions, foolishly attempted. For the rest, he constantly repeats this advice,

“ The action of the stronger to suspend,
 “ Reason still use, to Reason still attend.

Suffice that Reason keep to Nature's road, 115

Subject, compound them, follow her and God.

Love, Hope, and Joy, fair pleasure's smiling train,

Hate, Fear, and Grief, the family of pain,

These mix'd with art, and to due bounds confin'd,

Make and maintain the balance of the mind: 120

The lights and shades, whose well accorded strife

Gives all the strength and colour of our life.

Pleasures are ever in our hands or eyes;

And when, in act, they cease, in prospect, rise:

Present to grasp, and future still to find, 125

The whole employ of body and of mind.

All spread their charms, but charm not all alike;

On diff'rent senses diff'rent objects strike;

COMMENTARY.

VER. 123. *Pleasures are ever in our hands or eyes;*] His *third* argument against the Stoics (from *℥* 122 to 127.) is, that the Passions are a continual spur to the pursuit of Happiness; which, without these powerful inciters, we should neglect; and sink into a senseless indolence. Now Happiness is the end of our creation; and this excitement the means of Happiness; therefore, these movers, the Passions, are the instruments of God, which he hath put into the hands of Reason to work withal.

VER. 127. *All spread their charms, &c.*] The Poet now proceeds in his subject; and this last observation leads him naturally to the discussion of his next principle. He shews then, that though all the Passions have their turn in swaying the determinations of the mind, yet every Man hath one MASTER PASSION that at length stifles or absorbs all the rest. The fact he illustrates at large in his epistle

Hence diff'rent Passions more or less inflame,
 As strong or weak, the organs of the frame; 130
 And hence one MASTER PASSION in the breast,
 Like Aaron's serpent, swallows up the rest.

As Man, perhaps, the moment of his breath,
 Receives the lurking principle of death;

COMMENTARY.

to Lord Cobham. Here (from γ 126 to 149.) he giveth us the CAUSE of it. Those Pleasures or Goods, which are the objects of the Passions, affect the mind by striking on the senses; but, as through the formation of the organs of our frame, every man hath some one sense stronger and more acute than others, the object which strikes that stronger or acuter sense, whatever it be, will be the object most desired; and consequently, the pursuit of that will be the *ruling Passion*. That the difference of force in this ruling Passion shall, at first, perhaps, be very small or even imperceptible; but Nature, Habit, Imagination, Wit, nay even Reason itself shall assist its growth, 'till it hath at length drawn and converted every other into itself. All which is delivered in a strain of Poetry so wonderfully sublime, as suspends, for a while, the *ruling passion* in every Reader, and engrosses his whole Admiration.

This naturally leads the Poet to lament the weakness and insufficiency of human Reason (from γ 148 to 161.) and the purpose he had in so doing, was plainly to intimate THE NECESSITY OF A MORE PERFECT DISPENSATION TO MANKIND.

NOTES.

VER. 133. *As Man, perhaps, &c.*] “Antipater Sidonius
 “Poeta omnibus annis uno die natali tantum corripiebatur
 “febre, et eo consumptus est satis longa senectâ.” *Plin.*
 l. vii. *N. H.* This *Antipater* was in the times of Crassus;
 and is celebrated for the quickness of his parts by Cicero.

The young disease, that must subdue at length, 135
Grows with his growth, and strengthens with his
strength:

So, cast and mingled with his very frame,
The Mind's disease, its RULING PASSION came;
Each vital humour which should feed the whole,
Soon flows to this, in body and in soul: 140
Whatever warms the heart, or fills the head,
As the mind opens, and its functions spread,
Imagination plies her dang'rous art,
And pours it all upon the peccant part.

Nature its mother, Habit is its nurse; 145
Wit, Spirit, Faculties, but make it worse;
Reason itself but gives it edge and pow'r;
As Heav'n's blest beam turns vinegar more sow'r.

We, wretched subjects tho' to lawful sway,
In this weak queen, some fav'rite still obey: 150

NOTES.

VER. 147. *Reason itself, &c.*] The Poet, in some other of his epistles, gives examples of the doctrine and precepts here delivered. Thus, in that *Of the Use of Riches*, he has illustrated this truth in the character of Cotta:

“ Old Cotta sham'd his fortune and his birth,

“ Yet was not Cotta void of wit or worth.

“ What tho' (the use of barb'rous spits forgot)

“ His kitchen vy'd in coolness with his grot?

“ *If Cotta liv'd on pulse, it was no more*

“ *Than bramins, saints, and sages did before.*

VER. 149. *We, wretched Subjects, &c.*] St. Paul himself did not chuse to employ other arguments, when disposed

Ah! if she lend not arms, as well as rules,
 What can she more than tell us we are fools?
 Teach us to mourn our Nature, not to mend,
 A sharp accuser, but a helpless friend!
 Or from a judge turn pleader, to persuade 155
 The choice we make, or justify it made;
 Proud of an easy conquest all along,
 She but removes weak passions for the strong:
 So, when small humours gather to a gout,
 The doctor fancies he has driv'n them out. 160

Yes, Nature's road must ever be preferr'd;
 Reason is here no guide, but still a guard;

COMMENTARY.

VER. 161. *Yes, Nature's road, &c.*] Now as it appears, from the account here given of the *ruling Passion* and its cause, which results from the structure of the organs, that it is the road of Nature, the Poet shews (from v 160 to 167.) that this road is to be followed. So that the office of Reason is not to direct us what passion to exercise, but to assist us in RECTIFYING, and keeping within due bounds, that which Nature hath so strongly impressed; because

“ A mightier pow'r the strong direction sends,
 “ And sev'ral Men impels to sev'ral ends.

NOTES.

to give us the highest idea of the usefulness of CHRISTIANITY (*Rom. vii.*) But, it may be, the Poet finds a remedy in NATURAL RELIGION. Far from it. He here leaves Reason unrelieved. What is this, but an intimation that we ought to seek for a cure in that Religion, which only dares profess to give it? 2

'Tis her's to rectify, not overthrow,
 And treat this passion more as friend than foe:
 A mightier Pow'r the strong direction sends. 165
 And sev'ral Men impels to sev'ral ends:
 Like varying winds, by other passions tost,
 This drives them constant to a certain coast.

COMMENTARY.

VER. 167. *Like varying winds, &c.*] The Poet having proved that the *ruling passion* (since Nature hath given it us) is not to be overthrown, but *rectified*; the next inquiry will be of what *use* the ruling Passion is; for an use it must have, if reason be to treat it thus mildly. This use he shews us (from *vs* 166 to 197.) is twofold, Natural and Moral.

NOTES.

VER. 163. *'Tis her's to rectify, &c.*] The meaning of this precept is, That as the ruling Passion is implanted by Nature, it is Reason's office to regulate, direct, and restrain, but not to overthrow it. To reform the passion of Avarice, for instance, into a parsimonious dispensation of the public revenues: to direct the passion of Love, whose object is worth and beauty.

“ To the first good, first perfect, and first fair,
 the τὸ καλὸν τ' ἀγαθόν, as his master Plato advises; and to restrain Spleen to a contempt and hatred of Vice. This is what the Poet meant; and what every unprejudiced man could not but see he must needs mean, by RECTIFYING THE MASTER PASSION, though he had not confined us to this sense, in the reason he gives of his precept, in these words:

“ A mightier Pow'r the strong direction sends,

“ And sev'ral Men impels to sev'ral ends.

For, What ends are they which God impels to, but the ends of Virtue?

Let pow'r or knowledge, gold or glory, please,
 Or (oft more strong than all) the love of ease; 170
 Thro' life 'tis follow'd, even at life's expence;
 The merchant's toil, the sage's indolence,
 The monk's humility, the hero's pride,
 All, all alike, find Reason on their side.

Th' Eternal Art educing good from ill, 175
 Grafts on this Passion our best principle:
 'Tis thus the Mercury of Man is fix'd,
 Strong grows the Virtue with his nature mix'd;
 The dross cements what else were too refin'd,
 And in one int'rest body acts with mind. 180

As fruits, ungrateful to the planter's care,
 On savage stocks inserted, learn to bear;

COMMENTARY.

1. Its *Natural* use is to conduct Men steddily to one certain end; who would otherwise be eternally fluctuating between the equal violence of various and discordant passions, driving them up and down at random; and, by that means, to enable them to promote the good of Society, by making each a contributor to the common stock:

“ Let pow'r or knowledge, gold or glory, please, &c.

2. Its *Moral* use is to ingraft our ruling Virtue upon it; and by that means to enable us to promote our own good, by turning the exorbitancy of the *ruling passion* into its neighbouring Virtue.

“ See anger, zeal and fortitude supply; &c.

The wisdom of the divine Artist is, as the Poet finely observes, very illustrious in this contrivance; for the mind and body having now one common interest, the efforts of Virtue will have their force infinitely augmented:

“ 'Tis thus the Mercury, &c.

The surest Virtues thus from Passions shoot,
Wild Nature's vigor working at the root.

What crops of wit and honesty appear 185

From spleen, from obstinacy, hate, or fear!

See anger, zeal and fortitude supply;

Ev'n av'rice, prudence; sloth, philosophy;

Lust, thro' some certain strainers well refin'd,

Is gentle love, and charms all womankind; 190

Envy, to which th' ignoble mind's a slave,

Is emulation in the learn'd or brave;

Nor Virtue, male or female, can we name,

But what will grow on Pride, or grow on Shame.

Thus Nature gives us (let it check our pride) 195
The virtue nearest to our vice ally'd:

VARIATIONS.

After v 194. in the MS.

How oft, with Passion, Virtue points her Charms!

Then shines the Hero, then the Patriot warms.

Peleus' great Son, or Brutus, who had known,

Had Lucrece been a Whore, or Helen none?

But Virtues opposite to make agree,

That, Reason! is thy task; and worthy Thee.

Hard task, cries Bibulus, and Reason weak.

—Make it a point, dear Marquees! or a pique.

Once, for a whim, persuade yourself to pay.

A debt to Reason, like a debt at play.

For right or wrong have mortals suffer'd more?

B— for his Prince, or * * for his Whore?

Whose self-denials Nature most controul?

His, who would save a Sixpence or his Soul?

Reason the byas turns to good from ill,
 And Nero reigns a Titus, if he will.
 The fiery soul abhorr'd in Catiline,
 In Decius charms, in Curtius is divine :
 The same ambition can destroy or save,
 And makes a patriot as it makes a knave.

200

VARIATIONS.

Web for his health, a Chartreux for his Sin,
 Contend they not which soonest shall grow thin ?
 What we resolve, we can : but here's the fault,
 We ne'er resolve to do the thing we ought.

COMMENTARY.

VER. 197. *Reason the byas, &c.*] But lest it should be objected that this account favours the doctrine of Necessity, and would insinuate that men are only acted upon, in the production of good out of evil ; the Poet teacheth (from v 196 to 203.) that man is a free agent, and hath it in his power to turn the natural passions into virtues or into vices, properly so called :

“ Reason the byas turns to good from ill,

“ And Nero reigns a Titus, if he will.

Secondly, if it should be objected, that though he doth indeed tell us some actions are beneficial and some hurtful, yet he could not call those *virtuous* nor these *vicious*, because, as he hath described things, the motive appears to be only the gratification of some passion ; give me leave to answer for him, that this would be mistaking the argument, which (to v 249 of this epistle) considers the passions only with regard to *Society*, that is, with regard to their *effects* rather than their *motives* : That, however, 'tis his design to teach that actions are *properly virtuous and vicious* ; and though it be difficult to distinguish genuine virtue from spurious, they having both the same appearance, and

This light and darkneſs in our chaos join'd,
What ſhall divide? The God within the mind.

Extremes in Nature equal ends produce, 205
In Man they join to ſome myſterious uſe;

COMMENTARY.

both the ſame public effects, yet that they may be diſentangled. If it be asked, by what means? He replies (from *ſ* 202 to 205.) by conſcience: and this is to the purpoſe; for it is a Man's own concern alone to know whether his virtue be pure and ſolid; for what is it to *others*, whether this virtue, (while, as to them, the effect of it is the ſame) be real or imaginary.

VER. 205. *Extremes in Nature equal ends produce,*] But ſtill it will be ſaid, Why all this difficulty to diſtinguiſh true virtue from falſe? The Poet ſhews why (from *ſ* 204 to 211.) That though indeed vice and virtue ſo invade each other's bounds, that ſometimes we can ſcarce tell where one ends and the other begins, yet great purpoſes are ſerved thereby, no leſs than the perfecting the conſtitution of the Whole, as lights and ſhades, which run into one another in a well-wrought picture, make the harmony and ſpirit of the compoſition. But on this account to ſay there

NOTES.

VER. 204. *The God within the mind.*] A Platonic phraſe for CONSCIENCE; and here employed with great judgment and propriety. For Conſcience either ſignifies, ſpeculatively, the judgment we paſs of things upon whatever principles we chance to have; and then it is only Opinion, a very unable judge and divider; or elſe it ſignifies, practically, the application of the eternal rule of right (received by us as the law of God) to the regulation of our actions; and then it is properly Conſcience, *the God* (or the law of God) *within the mind*, of power to divide the light from the darkneſs in this Chaos of the paſſions.

Tho' each by turns the other's bound invade,
 As, in some well-wrought picture, light and shade,
 And oft so mix, the diff'rence is too nice
 Where ends the Virtue, or begins the Vice. 210

Fools! who from hence into the notion fall,
 That Vice or Virtue there is none at all,
 If white and black blend, soften, and unite
 A thousand ways, is there no black or white?
 Ask your own heart, and nothing is so plain? 215
 'Tis to mistake them, costs the time and pain,

Vice is a monster of so frightful mien,
 As, to be hated, needs but to be seen;

COMMENTARY.

is neither vice nor virtue, the Poet shews (from y 209 to 217.) would be just as wise as to say, there is neither black nor white; because the shade of that and the light of this often run into one another:

“ Ask your own heart, and nothing is so plain;

“ 'Tis to mistake them, costs the time and pain.

This is an error of *speculation*, which leads Men so foolishly to conclude, that there is neither vice nor virtue.

VER. 217. *Vice is a monster, &c.*] There is another Error of *prælice*, which hath more general and hurtful effects; and is next considered (from y 216 to 221.) It is this, that though, at the first aspect, Vice be so horrible as to affright all beholders, yet, when by habit we are once grown familiar with her, we first suffer, and in time begin to lose the memory of her nature; which necessarily implies an equal ignorance in the nature of Virtue. Hence men conclude, that there is neither one nor the other.

Yet seen too oft, familiar with her face,
 We first endure, then pity, then embrace. 220
 But where th' Extreme of Vice, was ne'er agreed :
 Ask where's the North? at York, 'tis on the Tweed ;
 In Scotland, at the Orcades ; and there,
 At Greenland, Zembla, or the Lord knows where.
 No creature owns it in the first degree, 225
 But thinks his neighbour further gone than he ;
 Ev'n those who dwell beneath its very zone,
 Or never feel the rage, or never own ;
 What happier natures shrink at with affright,
 The hard inhabitant contends is right. 230

V A R I A T I O N S.

After *✓* 220. in the 1st Edition, followed these,

A Cheat ! a Whore ! who starts not at the name,
 In all the Inns of Court or Drury-lane ?

After *✓* 226. in the MS.

The Col'nel swears the Agent is a dog,
 The Scriv'ner vows th' Attorney is a rogue.
 Against the Thief th' Attorney loud inveighs,
 For whose ten pound the County twenty pays.
 The Thief damns Judges, and the Knaves of State ;
 And dying, mourns small Villains hang'd by great.

C O M M E N T A R Y.

VER. 221. *But where th' Extreme of Vice, &c.]* But it is not only that extreme of Vice which stands next to Virtue, which betrays us into these mistakes. We are deceived too, as he shews us (from *✓* 220 to 231.) by our observations concerning the other extreme: For from the extreme of Vice being unsettled, Men conclude that Vice itself is only nominal,

Virtuous and vicious ev'ry Man must be,
 Few in th' extreme, but all in the degree;
 The rogue and fool by fits is fair and wise;
 And ev'n the best, by fits, what they despise.
 'Tis but by parts we follow good or ill; 235
 For, Vice or Virtue, Self directs it still;
 Each individual seeks a sev'ral goal;
 But HEAV'N's great view is One, and that the Whole.
 That counter-works each folly and caprice;
 That disappoints th' effect of ev'ry vice; 240

COMMENTARY.

VER. 231. *Virtuous and vicious ev'ry Man must be,*] There is yet a third cause of this error of *no Vice, no Virtue*, composed of the other two, *i. e.* partly *speculative*, and partly *practical*. And this also the Poet considers (from v 230 to 239) shewing it ariseth from the imperfection of the best characters, and the inequality of all: whence it happens that no Man is extremely virtuous or vicious; nor extremely constant in the pursuit of either. Why it so happens, the Poet informs us, who with admirable sagacity assigns the cause in this line:

“ For, Vice or Virtue, SELF directs it still.

An adherence or regard to what is, in the sense of the world, a man's own interest, making an extreme, in either, impossible. Its effect in keeping a good man from the extreme of Virtue, needs no explanation; and in an ill Man, Self-interest shewing him the necessity of some kind of reputation, the procuring, and preserving that, will necessarily keep him from the extreme of Vice.

VER. 239. *That counter-works each folly and caprice;*] The mention of this principle, that *Self* directs vice and virtue, and its consequence, which is, that

“ Each individual seeks a sev'ral goal,
 leads the Author to observe

“ That HEAV'N's great View is One, and that the Whole.

That, happy frailties to all ranks apply'd;
 Shame to the virgin, to the matron pride,
 Fear to the statesman, rashness to the chief,
 To kings presumption, and to crowds belief:
 That, Virtue's ends from vanity can raise, 245
 Which seeks no int'rest, no reward but praise;
 And build on wants, and on defects of mind,
 The joy, the peace, the glory of Mankind.
 Heav'n forming each on other to depend,
 A master, or a servant, or a friend, 250
 Bids each on other for assistance call,
 'Till one Man's weakness grows the strength of all.
 Wants, frailties, passions, closer still ally
 The common int'rest, or endear the tie.

COMMENTARY.

And this brings him naturally round again to his main subject, namely, *God's producing good out of ill*, which he prosecutes from v 238 to 249.

VER. 249. *Heav'n forming each on other to depend,*] I. Hitherto the Poet hath been employed in discoursing of the use of the Passions, with regard to Society at large; and in freeing his doctrine from objections: This is the *first* general division of the subject of this epistle.

II. He comes now to shew (from 248 to 261.) the use of these Passions, with regard to the more confined circle of our friends, relations, and acquaintance: and this is the *second* general division.

NOTES.

VER. 253. *Wants, frailties, passions, closer still ally
 The common int'rest, &c.]*

As these lines have been misunderstood, I shall give the reader their plain and obvious meaning. To these frail-

To these we owe true friendship, love sincere, 255
 Each home felt joy that life inherits here;
 Yet from the same we learn, in its decline,
 Those joys, those loves, those int'rests to resign;
 Taught half by Reason, half by mere decay,
 To welcome death, and calmly pass away. 260

Whate'er the Passion, knowledge, fame, or pelf,
 Not one will change his neighbour with himself.

COMMENTARY.

VER. 261. *Whate'er the Passion, &c.*] III. The Poet having thus shewn the use of the Passions in *Society*, and in *Domestic* life; comes, in the last place (from 260 to the end) to shew their use to the *Individual*, even in their illusions; the imaginary happiness they present, helping to make the real miseries of life less insupportable: And this is his *third* general division:

“ — Opinion gilds with varying rays
 “ Those painted clouds that beautify our days, &c.
 “ One prospect lost, another still we gain;
 “ And not a vanity is giv'n in vain.

NOTES.

ties (says he) we owe all the endearments of private life; yet, when we come to that age, which generally disposes men to think more seriously of the true value of things, and consequently of their provision for a future state, the consideration, that the grounds of those joys, loves, and friendships, are wants, frailties, and passions, proves the best expedient to wean us from the world; a disengagement so friendly to that provision we are now making for another State. The observation is new, and would in any place be extremely beautiful, but has here an infinite grace and propriety, as it so well confirms, by an instance of great moment, the general thesis, *That God makes Ill, at every step, productive of Good.*

The learn'd is happy nature to explore,
 The fool is happy that he knows no more ;
 The rich is happy in the plenty giv'n, 265
 The poor contents him with the care of Heav'n.
 See the blind beggar dance, the cripple sing,
 The sot a hero, lunatic a king ;
 The starving chemist in his golden views
 Supremely blest, the poet in his Muse. 270

COMMENTARY.

Which must needs vastly raise our idea of God's goodness ; who hath not only provided more than a counter-balance of real happiness to human miseries, but hath even, in his infinite compassion, bestowed on those, who were so foolish as not to have made this provision, an imaginary happiness ; that they may not be quite over-borne with the load of human miseries. This is the Poet's great and noble thought ; as strong and solid as it is new and ingenious : It teaches, that these illusions are the faults and follies of Men, which they willfully fall into ; and thereby deprive themselves of much happiness, and expose themselves to equal misery : but that still, God (according to his universal way of working) graciously turns these faults and follies so far to the advantage of his miserable creatures, as to become the present solace and support of their distresses :

“ —Tho' Man's a fool, yet God is wise.

NOTES.

VER. 270.—*the poet in his Muse.*] The Author having said, that no one would change his profession or views for those of another, intended to carry his observation still further, and shew that men were unwilling to exchange their own acquirements even for those of the same kind, confessedly larger, and infinitely more eminent, in another.

See some strange comfort ev'ry state attend,
 And pride bestow'd on all, a common friend :
 See some fit passion ev'ry age supply,
 Hope travels thro', nor quits us when we die.

Behold the child, by nature's kindly law, 275
 Pleas'd with a rattle, tickled with a straw :
 Some livelier play-thing gives his youth delight,
 A little louder, but as empty quite :
 Scarfs, garters, gold, amuse his riper stage,
 And beads and pray'r-books are the toys of age : 280
 Pleas'd with this bauble still, as that before,
 'Till tir'd he sleeps, and Life's poor play is o'er.
 Mean-while Opinion gilds with varying rays
 Those painted clouds that beautify our days ;
 Each want of happiness by Hope supply'd, 285
 And each vacuity of sense by Pride :

NOTES.

To this end he wrote,

“ What partly pleases, totally will shock :

“ I question much, if *Toland* would be *Locke*.

But wanting another proper instance of this truth, he reserved the lines above for some following Edition of this Essay.

VER. 280. *And beads and pray'r-books are the toys of age :*] A Satire on what is called in Popery the *Opus operatum*. As this is a description of the circle of human life returning into itself by a second child-hood, the Poet has with great elegance concluded his description with the same image with which he set out—*And life's poor play is o'er*.

VER. 286. *And each vacuity of sense by Pride :*] An eminent Casuist, *Father Francis Garasse*, in his *Somme Theologique*, has drawn a very charitable conclusion from this principle.

These build as fast as knowledge can destroy;
 In folly's cup still laughs the bubble, joy;
 One prospect lost, another still we gain;
 And not a vanity is giv'n in vain; 290
 Ev'n mean Self-love becomes, by force divine,
 The scale to measure others wants by thine.
 See! and confess, one comfort still must rise;
 'Tis this, Tho' Man's a fool, yet GOD IS WISE.

NOTES.

“ Selon la Justice (says this equitable Divine) tout travail
 “ honnête doit être recompensé de louange ou de satisfac-
 “ tion. Quand les bons esprits font un ouvrage excellent,
 “ ils sont justement recompensez par les suffrages du Pub-
 “ lic. Quand un pauvre esprit travaille beaucoup, pour
 “ faire un mauvais ouvrage, il n'est pas juste ni raisonnable,
 “ qu'il attende des louanges publiques; car elles ne lui
 “ sont pas dûes. Mais afin que ses travaux ne demeurent
 “ pas sans recompense, Dieu lui donne une satisfaction
 “ personnelle, qui personne ne lui peut envier sans une in-
 “ justice plus que barbare; tout ainsi que Dieu, qui est
 “ juste, donne de la satisfaction aux Grenouilles de leur
 “ chant. Autrement la blâme public, joint à leur mécon-
 “ tentement, seroit suffisant pour les réduire au desespoir.”

A R G U M E N T o f
E P I S T L E I I I.

*Of the Nature and State of Man with respect
to Society.*

I. *THE whole Universe one system of Society, § 7, &c. Nothing made wholly for itself, nor yet wholly for another, § 27. The happiness of Animals mutual, § 49. II. Reason or Instinct operate alike to the good of each Individual, § 79. Reason or Instinct operate also to Society, in all animals, § 109. III. How far Society carried by Instinct, § 115. How much farther by Reason, § 128. IV. Of that which is called the State of Nature, § 144. Reason instructed by Instinct in the Invention of Arts, § 166; and in the Forms of Society, § 176. V. Origin of Political Societies, § 196. Origin of Monarchy, § 207. Patriarchal Government, § 212. VI. Origin of true Religion and Government, from the same principle, of Love, § 231, &c. Origin of Superstition and Tyranny, from the same principle, of Fear, § 237, &c. The Influence of Self-love operating to the social and public Good, § 266. Restoration of true Religion and Government on their first principle, § 285. Mixt Government, § 288. Various Forms of each, and the true end of all, § 300, &c.*



*See some fit Passion every Age supply,
Hope travels through, nor quits us when we die.*

Essay on Man Ep. III.

E P I S T L E III.

HERE then we rest: “The Universal Cause
“Acts to one end, but acts by various laws.”

VARIATIONS.

VER. 1. in several Edit. in 4to.

Learn, Dulness, learn! “The Universal Cause, &c.

COMMENTARY.

WE are now come to the third epistle of the Essay on Man. It having been shewn, in explaining the origin, use, and end of the Passions, in the second epistle, that man hath social as well as selfish passions, that doctrine naturally introduceth the third, which treats of man as a SOCIAL animal; and connects it with the second, which considered him as an INDIVIDUAL. And as the conclusion from the subject of the first epistle made the introduction to the second, so here again, the conclusion of the second

“ (Ev’n mean Self-love becomes, by force divine,
“ The scale to measure others wants by thine.

maketh the introduction to the third,

“ Here then we rest: The Universal Cause

“ Acts to one end, but acts by various laws.

The reason of *variety* in those laws, which tend to *one* and the same *end*, the good of the Whole *generally*, is, because the good of the individual is likewise to be provided for; both which together make up the good of the Whole *universally*. And this is the cause (as the Poet says elsewhere) that

“ Each individual seeks a sev’ral goal,

VOL. III.

H

In all the madness of superfluous health,
The trim of pride, the impudence of wealth,

C O M M E N T A R Y.

But to prevent our resting there, God hath made each
need the assistance of another; and so

“ On mutual wants built mutual happiness.

It was necessary to explain the two first lines, the better to see the pertinency and force of what followeth (from *ŷ* 2 to 7.) where the Poet warns such to take notice of this truth, whose circumstances placing them in an imaginary station of Independence, and a real state of insensibility to *mutual wants* (from whence general Happiness results) make them but too apt to overlook the true system of things; *viz.* men in full health and opulence. This caution was necessary with regard to Society; but still more necessary with regard to Religion: Therefore he especially recommends the memory of it as well to Clergy as Laity, when they preach or pray; because the preacher, who doth not consider the first Cause under this view, as a Being consulting the good of the whole, must needs give a very unworthy idea of him; and the suppliant, who prayeth as one not related to a whole, or as disregarding the happiness of it, will not only pray in vain, but offend his Maker by an impious attempt to counter-work his dispensation.

N O T E S.

VER. 3.—*superfluous health,*] Immoderate labour and study are the great impairers of health: They, whose station sets them above both, must needs have an abundance of health, which not being employed in the common service, but wasted in Luxury, the Poet properly calls a *superfluity*.

VER. 4.—*impudence of wealth,*] Because *wealth* pretends to be wisdom, wit, learning, honesty, and, in short, all the virtues in their turns.

Let this great truth be present night and day; 5
But most be present, if we preach or pray.

Look round our World; behold the chain of Love
Combining all below and all above.

See plastic Nature working to this end,
The single atoms each to other tend, 10

COMMENTARY.

VER. 7. *Look round our World; &c.*] Next he introduceth his system of human Sociability (v 7, 8.) by shewing it to be the dictate of the Creator; and that Man, in this, did but follow the example of general Nature, which is united in one close system of benevolence.

VER. 9. *See plastic Nature working to this end,*] This he proveth, *first* (from v 8 to 13.) on the noble theory of At-

NOTES.

VER. 3, 4, 5, 6. M. Du Resnel not seeing into the admirable purpose of the caution, contained in these four lines, hath quite dropt the most material circumstances contained in the last of them; and, what is worse, for the sake of a foolish antithesis, hath destroyed the whole propriety of the thought in the two first: and so between both, hath left his Author neither sense nor system.

“ Dans le sein du bonheur, ou de l'adversité.

Now of all men, those in adversity have least need of this caution, as being least apt to forget, *That God consults the good of the whole, and provides for it by procuring mutual happiness by means of mutual wants*; because those who yet retain the smart of any fresh calamity are most compassionate to others labouring under distresses, and most prompt and ready to relieve them.

VER. 9. *See plastic Nature, &c.*] M. Du Resnel mistook this description of the *preservation* of the material Universe, by the principle of attraction, for the descrip-

Attract, attracted to, the next in place
 Form'd and impell'd its neighbour to embrace.
 See Matter next, with various life endu'd,
 Press to one centre still, the gen'ral Good.

COMMENTARY.

traction, from the œconomy of the material world; where there is a general conspiracy in all the particles of Matter to work for one end; the use, beauty, and harmony of the whole mass.

VER. 13. *See Matter next, &c.*] The *second* argument (from *ŷ* 12 to 27.) is taken from the vegetable and animal world; whose Beings serve mutually for the production, support, and sustentation of each other.

But this part of the argument, in which the Poet tells us, that God

“ Connects each being, greatest with the least;
 “ Made Beast in aid of Man, and Man of Beast;
 “ All serv'd, all serving —

awaking again the old pride of his adversaries, who cannot bear that man should be thought to be *serving* as well

NOTES.

tion of its *creation*; and so translates it,

“ *Voi du sein du Chaos eclater la lumiere,*

“ *Chaque atome ebranlé courir pour s'embrasser, &c.*

This destroys the Poet's fine analogical argument, by which he proves, from the circumstance of *mutual attraction* in matter, that man, while he seeks Society, and thereby promotes the good of his Species, co-operates with God's general dispensation; whereas the circumstance of a *creation* proves nothing but a *Creator*.

VER. 12. *Form'd and impell'd, &c.*] To make Matter so cohere as to fit it for the uses intended by its Creator, a proper *configuration* of its insensible parts, is as necessary as

See dying vegetables life sustain, 15

See life dissolving vegetate again:

All forms that perish other forms supply,

(By turns we catch the vital breath, and die)

Like bubbles on the sea of Matter born,

They rise, they break, and to that sea return. 20

Nothing is foreign; Parts relate to whole;

One all-extending, all-preserving Soul

COMMENTARY.

as *serv'd*; he takes this occasion again to humble them (from *y* 26 to 49.) by the same kind of argument he had so successfully employed in the first epistle, and which the comment on that epistle hath considered at large.

NOTES.

that quality so equally and universally conferred upon it, called *Attraction*. To express the first part of this thought, our Author says *form'd*; and to express the latter, *impell'd*.

VER. 19, 20. *Like bubbles, &c.*] Mr. Du Resnel, translates these two lines thus,

“ *Sort du neant y réntre, et reparoit au jour.*

He is here indeed consistently wrong: for having (as we said) mistaken the Poet's account of the *preservation* of *Matter* for the *creation* of it, he commits the very same mistake with regard to the *vegetable* and *animal* systems; and so talks now, tho' with the latest, of the *production* of *things out of nothing*. Indeed, by his speaking of their *returning into nothing*, he has subjected his Author to M. Du Croufaz's censure. “ Mr. Pope descends to the most vulgar prejudices, when he tells us that *each being returns to nothing*: the Vulgar think that what disappears is annihilated.” &c. *Comm. p. 221.*

VER. 22. *One all-extending, all-preserving Soul*] Which, in the language of Sir Isaac Newton, is, “ *Deus omnipræsens*

Connects each being, greatest with the least;
 Made Beast in aid of Man, and Man of Beast;
 All serv'd, all serving: nothing stands alone; 25
 The chain holds on, and where it ends, unknown.

Has God, thou fool! work'd solely for thy good,
 Thy joy, thy pastime, thy attire, thy food?
 Who for thy table feeds the wanton fawn,
 For him as kindly spread the flow'ry lawn: 30
 Is it for thee the lark ascends and sings?

Joy tunes his voice, joy elevates his wings.
 Is it for thee the linnet pours his throat?
 Loves of his own and raptures swell the note.
 The bounding steed you pompously bestride, 35
 Shares with his lord the pleasure and the pride.
 Is thine alone the seed that strews the plain?
 The birds of Heav'n shall vindicate their grain.
 Thine the full harvest of the golden year?
 Part pays, and justly, the deserving steer: 40
 The hog, that plows not nor obeys thy call,
 Lives on the labours of this lord of all.

NOTES.

“ est, non per virtutem solam, sed etiam per substantiam:
 “ nam virtus sine substantia subsistere non potest.” *Newt.*
Princ. schol. gen. sub fin.

VER. 23. *Greatest with the least;*] As acting more strongly
 and immediately in beasts, whose instinct is plainly an ex-
 ternal reason; which made an old school-man say, with
 great elegance, “ Deus est anima brutorum: ”

In this 'tis God directs—

Know, Nature's children all divide her care;
 The fur that warms a monarch, warm'd a bear.
 While Man exclaims, "See all things for my use!" 45
 "See man for mine!" replies a pamper'd goose:
 And just as short of reason He must fall,
 Who thinks all made for one, not one for all.

Grant that the pow'rful still the weak controul;
 Be Man the Wit and Tyrant of the whole: 50

VARIATIONS.

After v 46. in the former Editions,

What care to tend, to lodge, to cram, to treat him!
 All this he knew; but not that 'twas to eat him.
 As far as Goose could judge, he reason'd right;
 But as to Man, mistook the matter quite.

COMMENTARY.

VER. 49. *Grant that the pow'rful still the weak controul;*] However, his adversaries, loth to give up the question, will reason upon the matter; and we are now to suppose them objecting against Providence in this manner.—We grant, say they, that in the irrational, as in the inanimate creation, all is *served*, and all is *serving*: But, with regard

NOTES.

VER. 45. *See all things for my use!*] On the contrary, the wise man hath said, *The Lord hath made all things for himself*, Prov. xvi. 4.

VER. 50. *Be Man the Wit and Tyrant of the whole:*] Alluding to the witty system of that Philosopher, which made Animals mere Machines, insensible of pain or pleasure; and so encouraged Men in the exercise of that *Tyranny* over their fellow-creatures, consequent on such a principle.

Nature that Tyrant checks; He only knows,
 And helps, another creature's wants and woes.
 Say, will the falcon, stooping from above,
 Smit with her varying plumage, spare the dove?

COMMENTARY.

to Man, the case is different; he standeth single. For his reason hath endowed him both with power and address sufficient to make all things serve him; and his Self-love, of which you have so largely provided for him, will indispose him, in his turn, to serve any: Therefore your theory is imperfect.—Not so, replies the Poet (from *vs* 48 to 79.) I grant that Man, indeed, affects to be the Wit and Tyrant of the whole, and would fain shake off

“ —that chain of love,

“ Combining all below and all above:

But Nature, even by the very gift of Reason, checks this tyrant. For Reason endowing Man with the ability of setting together the memory of the past with his conjectures about the future; and past misfortunes making him apprehensive of more to come, this disposeth him to pity and relieve others in a state of suffering. And the passion growing habitual, naturally extendeth its effects to all that have a sense of suffering. Now as brutes have neither Man's Reason, nor his inordinate Self-love, to draw them from the system of beneficence; so they wanted not, and therefore have not, this human sympathy of another's misery: By which passion, we see those qualities, in Man, balance one another; and so retain him in that orderly connexion, in which Providence hath placed its whole creation. But this is not all; Man's interest, amusement, vanity, and luxury, tie him still closer to the system of beneficence, by obliging him to provide for the support of other animals; and though it be, for the most part, only to devour them with the greater gust, yet this does not abate the proper happiness of the animals so preserved, to

Admires the jay the insect's gilded wings? 55

Or hears the hawk when Philomela sings?

Man cares for all: to birds he gives his woods,
To beasts his pastures, and to fish his floods;
For some his Int'rest prompts him to provide,
For more his pleasure, yet for more his pride: 60

All feed on one vain Patron, and enjoy

Th' extensive blessing of his luxury,

That very life his learned hunger craves,

He saves from famine, from the savage saves;

Nay, feasts the animal he dooms his feast, 65

And, 'till he ends the being, makes it blest;

Which fees no more the stroke, or feels the pain,

Than favour'd Man by touch etherial slain.

The creature had his feast of life before;

Thou too must perish, when thy feast is o'er! 70

To each unthinking being, Heav'n a friend,

Gives not the useless knowledge of its end:

To Man imparts it; but with such a view

As, while he dreads it, makes him hope it too:

COMMENTARY.

whom Providence hath not imparted the useless knowledge of their end. From all which it appears, that the theory is yet uniform and perfect.

NOTES.

VER. 68. *Than favour'd Man, &c.*] Several of the ancients, and many of the Orientals since, esteemed those who were struck by lightning as sacred persons, and the particular favourites of Heaven. P.

The hour conceal'd, and so remote the fear, 75
 Death still draws nearer, never seeming near.
 Great standing miracle! that Heav'n assign'd
 Its only thinking thing this turn of mind.

II. Whether with Reason, or with Instinct blest,
 Know, all enjoy that pow'r which suits them best; 80
 To bliss alike by that direction tend,
 And find the means proportion'd to their end.

C O M M E N T A R Y.

VER. 79. *Whether with Reason, &c.*] But even to this as a caviller would still object, we must suppose he does so.—Admit (says he) that Nature hath endowed all animals, whether human or brutal, with such faculties as admirably fit them to promote the general good: yet, in its care for this, hath not Nature neglected to provide for the private good of the individual? We have cause to think she hath; and we suppose, it was on this exclusive consideration, that she kept back from brutes the gift of Reason (so necessary a means of private happiness) because Reason, as we find in the case of *Man*, where there is occasion for all the complicated contrivance you have described above, to make the effects of his Passions counter-work the immediate powers of his Reason, in order to keep him subservient to the general system; Reason, we say, naturally tends to draw Beings into a private, independent system. This the Poet answers, by shewing (from v. 78 to 109.) that the happiness of animal and that of human life are widely different: The happiness of human life consisting in the improvement of the mind, can be procured by Reason only; but the happiness of animal life consisting in the gratifications of sense, is best promoted by Instinct. And, with regard to the regular and constant operation of each; in *that*, Instinct hath plainly the advantage; for here God directs immediately; there, only mediately through Man.

Say, where full Instinct is th' unerring guide,
 What Pope or Council can they need beside?
 Reason, however able, cool at best, 85
 Cares not for service, or but serves when prest,
 Stays 'till we call, and then not often near;
 But honest Instinct comes a volunteer,
 Sure never to o'er-shoot but just to hit;
 While still too wide or short is human Wit; 90
 Sure by quick Nature happiness to gain,
 Which heavier Reason labours at in vain.
 This too serves always, Reason never long;
 One must go right, the other may go wrong.
 See then the acting and comparing pow'rs 95
 One in their nature, which are two in ours;
 And Reason raise o'er Instinct as you can,
 In this 'tis God directs, in that 'tis Man.

Who taught the nations of the field and wood
 To shun their poison, and to chuse their food? 100
 Prescient, the tides or tempests to withstand,
 Build on the wave, or arch beneath the sand?
 Who made the spider parallels design,
 Sure as De-moivre, without rule or line?

V A R I A T I O N S.

After y 84. in the MS.

While Man, with op'ning views of various ways
 Confounded, by the aid of knowledge strays:
 Too weak to chuse, yet chusing still in haste,
 One moment gives the pleasure and distaste.

Who bid the stork, Columbus-like, explore 105

Heav'ns not his own, and worlds unknown before?

Who calls the council, states the certain day,

Who forms the phalanx, and who points the way?

III. God, in the nature of each being, founds

Its proper bliss, and sets its proper bounds: 110

But as he fram'd a Whole, the Whole to bless,

On mutual Wants built mutual Happiness:

So from the first, eternal ORDER ran,

And creature link'd to creature, man to man.

What e'er of life all-quick'ning æther keeps, 115

Or breathes thro' air, or shoots beneath the deeps,

COMMENTARY.

VER. 109. *God, in the nature of each being, &c.*] The Author now cometh to the main subject of his epistle, the proof of Man's SOCIABILITY, from the two general societies composed by him; the *natural*, subject to *paternal* authority; and the *civil*, subject to that of a *magistrate*. This he hath the address to introduce, from what had preceded, in so easy and natural a manner, as sheweth him to have the art of giving all the grace to the dryness and severity of Method, as well as wit to the strength and depth of Reason. The philosophic nature of his work requiring he should shew by what means those Societies were introduced, this affords him an opportunity of sliding gracefully and easily from the preliminaries into the main subject; and so of giving his work that perfection of method, which we find only in the compositions of great writers. For having just before, though to a different purpose, described the power of bestial Instinct to attain the happiness of the *Individual*, he goeth on, in speaking of Instinct as it is serviceable both to that, and to the *Kind*

Or pours profuse on earth, one nature feeds
 The vital flame, and swells the genial feeds.
 Not man alone, but all that roam the wood,
 Or wing the sky, or roll along the flood, 120
 Each loves itself, but not itself alone,
 Each sex desires alike, 'till two are one.
 Nor ends the pleasure with the fierce embrace!
 They love themselves, a third time, in their race.
 Thus beast and bird their common charge attend, 125
 The mothers nurse it, and the fires defend;
 The young dismiss'd to wander earth or air,
 There stops the Instinct, and there ends the care;
 The link dissolves, each seeks a fresh embrace,
 Another love succeeds, another race. 130

COMMENTARY.

(from y 108 to 147.) to illustrate the original of *Society*. He sheweth, that though, as he had before observed, God had founded the proper blifs of each creature in the nature of its own existence; yet these not being independent individuals, but parts of a Whole, God, to bless that Whole, built mutual happiness on mutual wants: Now, for the supply of mutual wants, creatures must necessarily come together; which is the first ground of Society amongst Men. He then proceeds to that called *natural*, subject to *paternal* authority, and arising from the union of the two sexes; describes the imperfect image of it in brutes; then explains it at large in all its causes and effects. And lastly shews, that, as in *fact*, like mere animal society, it is founded and preserved by mutual wants, the supplial of which causeth mutual happiness; so is it likewise in *right*, as a rational Society, by equity, gratitude, and the observance of the relation of things in general.

A longer care Man's helpless kind demands;
 That longer care contracts more lasting bands:
 Reflection, Reason, still the ties improve,
 At once extend the int'rest, and the love;
 With choice we fix, with sympathy we burn; 135
 Each Virtue in each Passion takes its turn;
 And still new needs, new helps, new habits rise,
 That graft benevolence on charities.
 Still as one brood, and as another rose,
 These nat'ral love maintain'd, habitual those: 140
 The last, scarce ripen'd into perfect Man,
 Saw helpless him from whom their life began:
 Mem'ry and fore-cast just returns engage,
 That pointed back to youth, this on to age;
 While pleasure, gratitude, and hope, combin'd, 145
 Still spread the int'rest, and preserv'd the kind.

IV. Nor think, in NATURE'S STATE they blindly
 trod;

The State of Nature was the reign of God:

COMMENTARY.

VER. 147. *Nor think in Nature's state they blindly trod;*] But the Atheist and Hobbist, against whom Mr. Pope argueth, deny the principle of *Right*, or of natural Justice, before the invention of civil compact; which, they say, gave being to it: And accordingly have had the effrontery publicly to declare, *that a state of Nature was a state of War*. This quite subverteth the Poet's *natural Society*: Therefore, after this account of that state, he proceedeth to support the reality of it by overthrowing the oppugnant

Self-love and Social at her birth began,
 Union the bond of all things, and of Man. 150
 Pride then was not; nor Arts, that Pride to aid;
 Man walk'd with beast, joint-tenant of the shade;
 The same his table, and the same his bed;
 No murder cloath'd him, and no murder fed.
 In the same temple, the resounding wood, 155
 All vocal beings hymn'd their equal God:

COMMENTARY.

principle of *no natural Justice*; which he doth (from v 146 to 169.) by shewing, in a fine description of the state of Innocence, as represented in Scripture, that a state of Nature was so far from being without natural Justice, that it was, at first, *the reign of God*, where Right and Truth universally prevailed.

NOTES.

VER. 152. *Man walk'd with beast, joint-tenant of the shade;*] The Poet still takes his imagery from Platonic ideas, for the reason given above. Plato had said, from old tradition, that, during the Golden age, and under the reign of Saturn, the primitive language then in use was common to man and beasts. Moral Instructors took advantage of the popular sense of this tradition, to convey their precepts under those fables, which give speech to the whole brute-creation. The Naturalists understood the tradition to signify, that, in the first ages, Men used inarticulate sounds, like beasts, to express their wants and sensations; and that it was by slow degrees they came to the use of speech. This opinion was afterwards held by Lucretius, Diodorus Sic. and Gregory of Nyss.

VER. 156. *All vocal beings, &c.*] This may be well explained by a sublime passage of the Psalmist, who, calling

The shrine with gore unstain'd, with gold undrest,
Unbrib'd, unbloody, stood the blameless priest:

NOTES.

to mind the age of Innocence, and full of the great ideas of those

——“ Chains of Love,
“ Combining all below, and all above,
“ Which to one point and to one centre bring
“ BEAST, MAN, or ANGEL, *Servant, Lord, or King.*

breaks out into this rapturous and divine apostrophe, to call back the devious Creation to its pristine rectitude, that very state our author describes above, “ Praise the Lord, “ all angels; praise him, all ye hosts. Praise ye him, “ sun and moon; praise him, all ye stars of light. Let “ them praise the name of the Lord, for he commanded, “ and they were created. Praise the Lord, from the “ earth, ye dragons, and all deeps; fire and hail, snow “ and vapour, stormy wind fulfilling his word: Moun- “ tains and all hills, fruitful trees and all cedars: *Beasts* “ and all *cattle*, creeping things and flying fowl: *Kings* of “ the earth, and all people; *princes*, and all judges of the “ earth. Let them praise the name of the Lord; for his “ name alone is excellent, his glory is above the earth “ and heaven.” *Psal. cxlviii.*

VER. 158. *Unbrib'd, unbloody, &c.] i. e.* The state described, from *ψ* 262 to 269, was not yet arriv'd.

“ Then sacred seem'd th' etherial vault no more;
“ Altars grew marble then, and reek'd with gore:
“ Then first the Flamen tasted living food;
“ Next his grim Idol smear'd with human blood;
“ With Heav'n's own thunders shoot the world below,
“ And play'd the God an Engine on his foe.

For then, when Superstition was become so extreme as to bribe the Gods with human sacrifices: Tyranny became necessitated to woo the priest for a favourable answer.

Heav'n's attribute was Universal Care,
 And man's prerogative to rule, but spare. 160
 Ah! how unlike the man of times to come!
 Of half that live the butcher and the tomb;
 Who, foe to Nature, hears the gen'ral groan,
 Murders their species, and betrays his own.
 But just disease to luxury succeeds, 165
 And ev'ry death it's own avenger breeds;

NOTES.

VER. 159. *Heaven's attribute, &c.*] The Poet supposes the truth of the Scripture account, that Man was created lord of this inferior world (Ep. i. v. 230.)

“ Subjected these to those, and all to thee.

What hath misled some to imagine that our Author hath here fallen into a contradiction, was, I suppose, such passages as these, *Ask for what end the heav'nly bodies shine, &c.* And again, *Has God, thou fool! work'd solely for thy good, &c.* But, in truth, this is so far from contradicting what he had said of Man's prerogative, that it greatly confirms it, and the Scripture account concerning it. And because the licentious manner in which this subject has been treated, has made some readers jealous and mistrustful of the Author's sober meaning, I shall endeavour to explain it. Scripture says, that Man was made Lord of this sublunary world: But intoxicated with Pride, the common effect of sovereignty, he erected himself, like little partial monarchs, into a tyrant. And as tyranny consists in supposing *all* made for the use of *one*; he took those freedoms with *all*, which are the consequence of such a principle. He soon began to consider the whole animal creation as his slaves rather than his subjects: as created for no use of their own, but for his use only; and therefore treated them with the utmost cruelty: And not so content, to add

The Fury-passions from that blood began,
And turn'd on Man a fiercer savage, Man.

See him from Nature rising slow to Art!
To copy Instinct then was Reason's part; 170

COMMENTARY.

VER. 169. *See him from Nature rising slow to Art!*] Strict method (in which, by this time, the reader finds the Poet to be more conversant than some were aware of) leads him next to speak of that Society, which succeeded the *Natural*, namely the *Civil*. He first explains (from v 169 to 199.) the intermediate *means* which led Mankind from natural to civil Society. These were the invention and improvement of Arts. For while men lived in a mere state of Nature there was no need of any other government than the Paternal; but when Arts were found out and improved, then that more perfect form, under the direction of a Magistrate, became necessary: And for these reasons; first, to bring those Arts, already found, to perfection: and, secondly, to secure the product of them to their rightful proprietors. The Poet, therefore, comes now, as we say, to the invention of Arts; but being always intent on the great end for which he wrote his Essay, namely to mortify that Pride which occasions all the impious complaints against Providence; he speaks of these inventions as only lessons learnt of mere animals guided by instinct; and thus, at the same time, gives a new instance

NOTES.

insult to his cruelty, he endeavoured to philosophize himself into an opinion that these animals were mere machines, insensible of pain or pleasure. Thus Man affected to be the *Wit* as well as *Tyrant* of the Whole: So that it became one who adhered to the Scripture-account of Man's dominion, to reprove this abuse of it, and to shew that

“Heav'n's attribute was Universal Care,

“And Man's prerogative to rule, but spare.

Thus then to Man the voice of Nature spake —

“ Go, from the Creatures thy instructions take :

COMMENTARY.

of the wonderful Providence of God, who has contrived to teach mankind in a way, not only proper to humble human pride, but to raise our idea of divine Wisdom to the highest pitch. This he does in a *prosopopœia* the most sublime that ever entered into the human imagination :

Thus then to Man the voice of Nature spake :

“ Go, from the creatures thy instructions take, &c.

“ And for those Arts mere Instinct could afford,

“ Be crown'd as Monarchs, or as Gods ador'd.”

NOTES.

VER. 170. *Thus then to Man the voice of Nature spake —
Go, &c.]*

M. Du Resnel has translated the lines thus,

“ La Nature *indigné* alors se fit entendre ;

“ Va, *malheureux* mortel, va, lui dit elle, apprendre.

One would wonder what should make the Translator represent Nature in such a passion with man, and calling him names, at a time when Mr. Pope supposed her in her best good humour. But what led him into this blunder was another as gross. His Author having described the *State of innocence* which ends at these lines,

“ Heav'n's attribute was Universal Care,

“ And Man's prerogative to rule, but spare.

turns from *those* times, to a view of *these latter ages*, and breaks out into this tender and humane complaint,

“ Ah ! how unlike the *man of times to come*,

“ Of half that live the Butcher, and the Tomb, &c.

Unluckily, M. Du Resnel took this *man of times to come* for the corrupter of that *first age* ; and so imagined the Poet had introduced NATURE only to set things right ; he then supposed, of course she was to be very angry ; and

- “ Learn from the birds what food the thickets yield ;
 “ Learn from the beasts the phyfic of the field ;
 “ Thy arts of building from the bee receive ; 175
 “ Learn of the mole to plow, the worm to weave ;
 “ Learn of the little Nautilus to sail,
 “ Spread the thin oar, and catch the driving gale.

C O M M E N T A R Y .

The delicacy of the Poet's address in the first part of the last line, is very remarkable. In this paragraph he has given an account of those intermediate means, that led Men from natural to civil Society, that is to say, the invention and improvement of Arts. Now here, on his conclusion of this account, and his entry upon the description of civil Society itself, he connects the two parts the most gracefully that can be conceived, by this true historical circumstance, that it was the invention of *those Arts* which raised to the Magistracy in this new Society formed for the perfecting of them.

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not finding the Author had represented her in any great Emotion, he was willing to improve upon his Original.

VER. 173. *Learn from the birds, &c.*] It is a caution commonly practised amongst Navigators, when thrown upon a desert coast, and in want of refreshments, to observe what fruits have been touched by the Birds : and to venture on these without further hesitation.

VER. 174. *Learn from the beasts, &c.*] See Pliny's *Nat. Hist.* l. viii. c. 27. where several instances are given of Animals discovering the medicinal efficacy of herbs, by their own use of them ; and pointing out to some operations in the art of healing, by their own practice.

VER. 177. *Learn of the little Nautilus*] Oppian. *Halieut.* lib. i. describes this fish in the following manner : “ They
 “ swim on the surface of the sea, on the back of their

" Here too all forms of social union find,
 " And hence let Reason, late, instruct Mankind: 180
 " Here subterranean works and cities see;
 " There towns aerial on the waving tree.
 " Learn each small People's genius, policies,
 " The Ant's republic, and the realm of Bees;
 " How those in common all their wealth bestow, 185
 " And Anarchy without confusion know;
 " And these for ever, tho' a Monarch reign,
 " Their sep'rate cells and properties maintain.
 " Mark what unvary'd laws preserve each state,
 " Laws wise as Nature, and as fix'd as Fate. 190
 " In vain thy Reason finer webs shall draw,
 " Entangle Justice in her net of Law,
 " And right, too rigid, harden into wrong;
 " Still for the strong too weak, the weak too strong.
 " Yet go! and thus o'er all the creatures sway, 195
 " Thus let the wiser make the rest obey;
 " And for those Arts mere Instinct could afford,
 " Be crown'd as Monarchs, or as Gods ador'd."

VARIATIONS.

VER. 197. in the first Editions,

Who for those Arts they learn'd of Brutes before,
 As Kings shall crown them, or as Gods adore.

NOTES.

" shells, which exactly resemble the hulk of a ship; they
 " raise two feet like masts, and extend a membrane be-
 " tween, which serves as a sail; the other two feet they
 " employ as oars at the side. They are usually seen in
 " the Mediterranean." P.

V. Great Nature spoke ; observant Men obey'd ;
 Cities were built, Societies were made : 200
 Here rose one little state ; another near
 Grew by like means, and join'd, thro' love or fear.
 Did here the trees with ruddier burthens bend,
 And there the streams in purer rills descend ?
 What War could ravish, Commerce could bestow, 205
 And he return'd a friend, who came a foe.

VARIATIONS.

VER. 201. *Here rose one little state, &c.*] In the MS. thus,
 The Neighbours leagu'd to guard their common spot:
 And Love was Nature's dictate, Murder, not.
 For want alone each animal contends ;
 Tigers with Tigers, that remov'd, are friends.
 Plain Nature's wants the common mother crown'd,
 She pour'd her acorns, herbs, and streams around.
 No Treasure then for rapine to invade ;
 What need to fight for sun-shine or for shade ?
 And half the cause of contest was remov'd,
 When beauty could be kind to all who lov'd.

COMMENTARY.

VER. 199. *Great Nature spoke ;*] After all this necessary preparation, the Poet shews (from v 198 to 209.) how civil Society followed, and the advantages it produced.

NOTES.

VER. 199.—*observant Men obey'd ;*] The epithet is beautiful, as signifying both obedience to the voice of Nature, and attention to the lessons of the animal creation.—But M. l'Abbé, who has a strange fatality of contradicting his original, whenever he attempts to *paraphrase* (as he calls it) the sense, turns the lines in this manner,

“ Par ces mots la nature excita l'Industrie,
 “ Et de l'Homme feroce enchaina la furie.

Converse and Love mankind might strongly draw,
When Love was Liberty, and Nature Law.

Thus States were form'd; the name of King unknown,
'Till common int'rest plac'd the sway in one. 210
'Twas VIRTUE ONLY (or in arts or arms,
Diffusing blessings, or averting harms)

COMMENTARY.

VER. 209. *Thus States were form'd;*] Having thus explained the original of Civil Society, he shews us next (from v 208 to 215.) that to this Society a *civil magistrate*, properly so called, did belong: And this in confutation of that idle hypothesis, which pretends that God conferred

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Chain'd up the fury of savage Man; and so contradicts the Author's whole system of *benevolence*: and goes over to the Atheist's; who supposes *the state of nature to be a state of war*. What seems to have misled him was these lines,

“ What War could ravish, Commerce could bestow,

“ And he return'd a friend who came a foe.

But M. Du Resnel should have considered, that tho' the Author holds, *a state of nature to be a state of peace*, yet he never imagined it impossible that there should be quarrels in it. He had said,

“ So drives self-love thro' just and thro' unjust.

He pushes no system to an extravagance, but *steers* (as he says in his preface) thro' doctrines seemingly opposite, or, in other words, follows truth uniformly throughout.

VER. 208. *When love was Liberty,*] *i. e.* When men had no need to guard their native liberty from their governors by civil pactions; the love which each master of a family had for those under his care being their best security.

VER. 211. *'Twas Virtue only, &c.*] Our Author hath good authority for this account of the origin of kingship. Aristotle assures us, that it was Virtue only, or in arts or

The same which in a Sire the Sons obey'd,
A Prince the Father of a People made.

VI. 'Till then, by Nature crown'd, each Patriarch
fate, 215
King, priest, and parent of his growing state;

C O M M E N T A R Y.

the regal title on the Fathers of families; from whence men, when they had instituted Society, were to fetch their Governors. On the contrary, our Author shews, that a King was unknown, 'till common interest, which led men to institute civil government, led them at the same time to institute a Governor. However, that it is true that the same wisdom or valour, which gained regal obedience from sons to the sire, procured kings a paternal authority, and made them considered as fathers of their people. Which probably was the original (and, while mistaken, continues to be the chief support) of that slavish error: Antiquity representing its earliest monarchs under the idea of a common father, *πατὴρ ἀνδρῶν*. Afterwards indeed they became a kind of foster-fathers, *ποιμένα λαῶν*, as Homer calls one of them: 'Till at length they began to devour that flock they had been so long accustomed to shear; and, as Plutarch says of Cecrops, *ἐκ χειρὸς βασιλέως ἄγριον καὶ δρακον- τὶ δὴ γυόμενον* TYRANNON.

VER. 215. *'Till then, by Nature crown'd, &c.*] The Poet now returns (at ψ 215 to 241.) to what he had left unfinished in his description of natural Society. This, which appears irregular, is indeed a fine instance of his thorough knowledge of Method. I will explain it:

This third epistle, we see, considers Man with respect to SOCIETY; the second, with respect to HIMSELF; and

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arms: Καθίσταται Βασιλεὺς ἐκ τῶν ἐπικεικῶν καθ' ἰσχυροχὴν ἀρετῆς, ἢ πρᾶξεων τῶν ἀπὸ τῆς ἀρετῆς, ἢ καθ' ἰσχυροχὴν τοιαύτη γλῶσσις.

On him, their second Providence, they hung,
 Their law his eye, their oracle his tongue.
 He from the wond'ring furrow call'd the food,
 Taught to command the fire, controul the flood, 220

COMMENTARY.

the fourth, with respect to HAPPINESS. But in none of these relations does the Poet ever lose sight of him under that in which he stands to God: It will follow, therefore, that speaking of him with respect to *Society*, the account would be then most imperfect, were he not at the same time considered with respect to his *Religion*; for between these two, there is a close, and, while things continue in order, a most interesting connection:

“ True FAITH, true POLICY united ran;

“ That was but love of God, and this of Man.

Now Religion suffering no change or depravation, when Man first entered into civil Society, but continuing the same as in the state of Nature; the Author, to avoid repetition, and to bring the account of *true* and *false* Religion nearer to one another, in order to contrast them by the advantage of that situation, deferred giving account of his *Religion* till he had spoken of the origin of that Society. Thence it is that he here resumes the account of the state of Nature, that is, so much of it as he had left untouched, which was only the *Religion* of it. This consisting in the knowledge of one God, the Creator of all things, he shews how Men came by that knowledge: That it was either found out by REASON, which giving to every effect, a cause, instructed them to go from cause to cause, till they came to the first, who, being causeless, would ne-

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VER. 219. *He from the wond'ring furrow, &c.] i. e.* He subdued the intractability of all the *four elements*, and made them subservient to the use of Man.

Draw forth the monsters of th' abyfs profound,
Or fetch the aerial eagle to the ground.

'Till drooping, sick'ning, dying they began
Whom they rever'd as God to mourn as Man:
Then, looking up from fire to fire, explor'd 225
One great first father, and that first ador'd.

COMMENTARY.

cessarily be judged self-existent: or else that it was taught by TRADITION, which preserved the memory of the Creation. He then tells us *what* these men, undebauched by false science, understood by God's nature and attributes: *First*, of God's *Nature*, that they easily distinguished between the Worker and the Work; saw the substance of the Creator to be distinct and different from that of the creature, and so were in no danger of falling into the horrid opinion of the Greek philosophers, and their follower, Spinoza. And simple Reason teaching them that the Creator was but One, they easily saw that all was right,

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VER. 225. *Then looking up, &c.*] The Poet here maketh their more serious attention to Religion to have arisen, not from their gratitude amidst abundance, but from their helplessness in distress; by shewing, that in prosperity, they rested in *second causes*, the immediate authors of their blessings, *whom they revered as God*; but that, in adversity, they reasoned up to the *First*:

“ Then looking up from fire to fire, &c.

This, I am afraid, is but too true a representation of human nature.

VER. 225, to ver. 240.] M. Du Resnel, not apprehending that the Poet was here returned to finish his description of the State of Nature, has fallen into one of the grossest mistakes that ever was committed. He has mistaken this account of *true Religion* for an account of the

Or plain tradition that this All begun,
 Convey'd unbroken faith from fire to son;
 The worker from the work distinct was known,
 And simple Reason never fought but one: 230
 Ere Wit oblique had broke that steady light,
 Man, like his Maker, saw that all was right;

COMMENTARY.

and so were in as little danger of falling into the Manichean error; which, when *oblique Wit* had broken the *steady light* of Reason, imagined all was not right, having before imagined that all was not the work of One. *Secondly*, he shews, what they understood of God's *Attributes*; that they easily acknowledged a Father where they found a Deity; and could not conceive a sovereign Being to be any other than a sovereign Good.

NOTES.

origin of Idolatry; and thus he fatally embellishes his own blunder,

- “ Jaloux d'en conserver les traits et la figure,
- “ Leur zèle industrieux inventa la peinture.
- “ Leurs neveux, attentifs à ces hommes fameux,
- “ Qui par le droit du sang avoient régné sur eux,
- “ Trouvent-ils dans leur suite *un grand, un premier pere*,
- “ Leur aveugle respect l'adore et le révere.

Here you have one of the finest pieces of reasoning turned at once into a heap of nonsense. The unlucky term of *Great first Father*, was mistaken by our Translator to signify a *Great Grand Father*. But he should have considered, that Mr. Pope always represents God under the idea of a FATHER: He should have observed that the Poet is here describing those men who

- “ To *Virtue* in the paths of pleasure trod,
- “ And own'd a *Father*, where they own'd a *God*.

VER. 231. *Ere Wit oblique, &c.*] A beautiful allusion to the effects of the prismatic glass on the rays of light.

To Virtue, in the paths of Pleasure trod,
 And own'd a Father when he own'd a God.
 Love all the faith, and all th' allegiance then; 235
 For Nature knew no right divine in Men,
 No ill could fear in God; and understood
 A sov'reign being but a sov'reign good.
 True faith, true policy, united ran,
 That was but love of God, and this of Man. 240
 Who first taught souls enslav'd, and realms undone,
 Th' enormous faith of many made for one;
 That proud exception to all Nature's laws,
 T' invert the world, and counter-work its Cause?

C O M M E N T A R Y.

VER. 241. *Who first taught souls enslav'd, &c.*] Order leadeth the Poet to speak (from ψ 240 to 246.) of the corruption of *civil Society* into *Tyranny*, and its Causes; and here, with all the dexterity of address as well as force of truth, he observes it arose from the violation of that great Principle, which he so much insists upon throughout his Essay, *that each was made for the use of all*. We may be sure, that, in this corruption, where right or natural justice was cast aside, and violence, the Atheist's justice, presided in its stead, *Religion* would follow the fate of civil

N O T E S.

VER. 242. *Th' enormous faith, &c.*] In this Aristotle placeth the difference between a King and a Tyrant, that the first supposeth himself made for the People; the other, that the People are made for him: Βέλειαι δ' ὁ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ εἶναι φύλαξ, ὅπως οἱ μὲν κεκλημένοι τὰς ἐσίας μηθὲν ἀδίκον πάσχωσιν, ὁ δὲ δῆμος μὴ ὑβρίζῃται μηθέν· ἡ δὲ ΤΥΡΑΝΝΙΣ πρὸς ἐδὲν ἀποβλέπει κοινόν, εἰ μὴ τῆς ἰδίας ὠφελείας χάριν. Pol. lib. v. cap. 10.

Force first made Conquest, and that conquest, Law;
 'Till Superstition taught the tyrant awe, 246

COMMENTARY.

Society: We know, from ancient history, it did so. Accordingly Mr. Pope, (from *ŷ* 245 to 269.) together with corrupt Politics, describes corrupt Religion and its Causes: he first informs us, agreeable to his exact knowledge of Antiquity, that it was the Politician and not the Priest (as the illiterate tribe of Freethinkers would make us believe) who first corrupted Religion. Secondly, That the Superstition, he brought in, was not invented by him, as an engine to play upon others (as the dreaming Atheist feigns, who would thus account for the origin of Religion) but was a trap he first fell into himself.

“ Superstition taught the tyrant awe.

NOTES.

VER. 245. *Force first made Conquests, &c.*] All this is agreeable to fact, and shews our Author's exact knowledge of human nature. For that *Impotency* of mind (as the Latin writers call it) which gives birth to the enormous crimes necessary to support a Tyranny, naturally subjects its owner to all the vain, as well as real, terrors of Conscience: Hence the whole machinery of Superstition.

It is true, the Poet observes, that afterwards, when the Tyrant's fright was over, he had cunning enough, from the experience of the effect of Superstition upon himself, to turn it, by the assistance of the Priest (who for his reward went sharer with him in the Tyranny) against the justly dreaded resentment of his Subjects. For a Tyrant naturally and reasonably supposes all his Slaves to be his Enemies.

Having given the causes of Superstition, he next describes its objects:

“ Gods partial, changeful, passionate, unjust, &c.

The ancient Pagan Gods are here very exactly described.

EP. III. ESSAY ON MAN. III

Then sacred seem'd th' etherial vault no more;
 Altars grew marble then, and reek'd with gore:
 Then first the Flamen tasted living food; 265
 Next his grim idol smear'd with human blood;
 With heav'n's own thunders shook the world below,
 And play'd the God an engine on his foe.

So drives Self-love, thro' just and thro' unjust,
 To one Man's pow'r, ambition, lucre, lust: 270
 The same Self-love, in all, becomes the cause
 Of what restrains him, Government and Laws.

COMMENTARY.

VER. 269. *So drives Self-love, &c.*] The inference our Author draws from all this (from v 268 to 283.) is, that Self-love drives through right and wrong; it causeth the Tyrant to violate the rights of mankind; and it causeth the People to vindicate that violation. For Self-love being common to the whole species, and setting each individual in pursuit of the same objects, it became necessary for each, if he would secure his own, to provide for the safety of another's. And thus Equity and Benevolence arose from that same Self-love which had given birth to Avarice and Injustice:

“ His Safety must his Liberty restrain;
 “ All join to guard what each desires to gain.

The Poet hath not any where shewn greater address, in the disposition of his work, than with regard to the inference before us; which not only giveth a proper and timely support to what had been advanced, in the second epistle concerning the nature and effects of Self-love; but is a necessary introduction to what follows, concerning the Reformation of Religion and Society; as we shall see presently.

For, what one likes if others like as well,
 What serves one will, when many wills rebel?
 How shall he keep, what, sleeping or awake, 275
 A weaker may surprise, a stronger take?
 His safety must his liberty restrain:
 All join to guard what each desires to gain.
 Forc'd into virtue thus by Self-defence,
 Ev'n Kings learn'd justice and benevolence: 280
 Self-love forsook the path it first pursu'd,
 And found the private in the public good.

'Twas then, the studious head or gen'rous mind,
 Follow'r of God or friend of human-kind,
 Poet or Patriot, rose but to restore 285
 The Faith and Moral, Nature gave before;
 Re-lum'd her ancient light, not kindled new;
 If not God's image, yet his shadow drew:

COMMENTARY.

VER. 283. *'Twas then, the studious head, &c.*] The Poet hath now described the rise, perfection, and decay of civil Policy and Religion, in the more early times. But the design had been imperfect, had he here dropt his discourse: There was, in after ages, a recovery of these from their several corruptions. Accordingly, he hath chosen that happy æra for the conclusion of his Song. But as good and ill Governments and Religions succeed one another without ceasing, he now leaveth facts, and turneth his dis-

NOTES.

VER. 283. *'Twas then, &c.*] The Poet seemeth here to mean the polite and flourishing age of Greece; and those benefactors to Mankind, which he had principally in view, were SOCRATES and ARISTOTLE; who, of all the pagan world, spoke best of God, and wrote best of Government.

Taught Pow'rs due use to People and to Kings,
 Taught nor to slack, nor strain its tender strings, 290
 The less, or greater, set so justly true,
 That touching one must strike the other too;
 'Till jarring int'rests, of themselves create
 Th' according music of a well-mix'd State.
 Such is the World's great harmony, that springs 295
 From Order, Union, full Consent of things:

COMMENTARY.

course [from v 282 to 295.] to speak of a more lasting re-
 form of mankind, in the Invention of those philosophic
 Principles, by whose observance a Policy and Religion may
 be for ever kept from sinking into Tyranny and Superstition:

“ 'Twas then the studious head or gen'rous mind,
 “ Follow'r of God or friend of human kind,
 “ Poet or Patriot rose but to restore
 “ The Faith and Moral, Nature gave before; &c.

The easy and just transition into this subject from the fore-
 going, is admirable. In the foregoing he had described
 the effects of Self-love; and now, with great art, and
 high probability, he maketh Mens *observations* on these
 effects the occasion of those discoveries which they have
 made of the true principles of Policy and Religion, de-
 scribed in the present paragraph; and this he evidently
 hinteth at in that fine transition,

“ 'Twas then, the studious head, &c.

VER. 295. *Such is the World's great harmony, &c.*] Hav-
 ing thus described the true principles of civil and eccle-
 siastical Policy, he proceedeth (from v 294 to 303.) to

NOTES.

VER. 295. *Such is the World's great harmony, &c.*] An
 harmony very different from the *pre-established harmony* of
 the celebrated Leibnitz, which establisheth a Fatality de-

Where small and great, where weak and mighty, made
To serve, not suffer, strengthen, not invade;

COMMENTARY.

illustrate his account by the similar harmony of the Universe:

“ Such is the World’s great harmony, that springs

“ From Order, Union, full Consent of things:

Thus, as in the beginning of this epistle he supported the great principle of mutual Love or Association in *general*, by considerations drawn from the properties of *Matter*, and the mutual dependence between *vegetable* and *animal* life: so, in the conclusion, he hath enforced the *particular* principles of Civil and Religious Society, from that *universal Harmony* which springs, in part, from those properties and dependencies.

NOTES.

structive of all Religion and Morality. Yet hath the Poet been accused of espousing that impious whimsy. The *pre-establiſhed harmony* was built upon, and is an outrageous extension of a conception of Plato; who, combating the atheistical objections about the *origin of Evil*, employs this argument in the defence of Providence; “ That amongst
“ an infinite number of possible worlds in God’s idea,
“ this, which he hath created and brought into being, and
“ which consists of a mixture of Evil, is the best. But if
“ the best, then Evil is partial, comparatively small, and
“ tendeth to the greater perfection of the whole.” This Principle is espoused and supported by Mr. Pope with all the powers of reason and poetry. But neither was Plato a Fatalist, nor is there any fatalism in the argument. As to the truth of the notion, that is another question; and how far it cleareth up the very difficult controversy about the origin of Evil, is still another. That it is a full solution of the difficulty, I cannot think, for reasons too long to be given in this place. Perhaps we shall never have a full solution here: and it may be no great matter though

More pow'rful each as needful to the rest,
And, in proportion as it blesses, blest; 300

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we have not, as we are demonstrably certain of the moral attributes of the Deity. However, Mr. Pope may be justified in receiving and enforcing this Platonic notion, as it hath been adopted by the most celebrated and orthodox divines both of the ancient and modern church.

This doctrine, we own then, was taken up by Leibnitz; but it was to ingraft upon it a most pernicious fatalism. Plato said, God *chose* the best: Leibnitz said, he *could not but* chuse the best, as he could not act without, what this philosopher called a *sufficient reason*. Plato supposed freedom in God to chuse one of two things equally good: Leibnitz held the supposition to be absurd: however, admitting the case, he still held that God could *not* chuse one of two things equally good. Thus it appears, the first went on the system of Freedom; and that the latter, notwithstanding the most artful disguises in his *Theodicée*, was a thorough Fatalist: For we cannot well suppose he would give that freedom to Man which he had taken away from God. The truth of the matter seems to be this: he saw, on the one hand, the monstrous absurdity of supposing, with Spinoza, that blind Fate was the author of a coherent Universe; but yet, on the other, could not conceive with Plato, how God should foresee and conduct, according to an archetypal idea, a World, of all possible Worlds the best, inhabited by *free Agents*. This difficulty therefore, which made the Socinians take Pre-science from God, disposed Leibnitz to take Free-will from Man: And thus he fashioned his fantastical hypothesis; he supposed that when God made the body, he impressed on his new Machine a certain series or suite of *motions*; and that when he made the fellow soul, he impressed a correspondent series of *ideas*; whose operations, throughout the whole duration of the union, so exactly concorded, that whenever an *idea* was excited, a correspondent *motion* was

Draw to one point, and to one centre bring
Beast, Man, or Angel, Servant, Lord, or King.

For Forms of Government let fools contest;
What e'er is best administer'd is best:

COMMENTARY.

VER. 303. *For Forms of Government let Fools contest;*] But now the Poet, having so much commended the invention and inventors of the philosophic principles of Religion and Government, lest an evil use should be made of this, by Men's resting in theory and speculation, as they have

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ever ready to satisfy the volition. Thus, for instance, when the mind had the *will* to raise the arm to the head, the body was so pre-contrived, as to raise, at that very moment, the part required. This he called the PRE-ESTABLISHED HARMONY; and with this, he promised to do wonders. “Yet after all (says an excellent philosopher and best interpreter of Newton) he owned to his friends, that this extraordinary notion was only a *lusus ingenii* (un jeu d'esprit) to try his parts, and laugh at the credulity of Philosophers; who are as fond of a new paradox, as Enthusiasts of a new light. If at other times he was so pleased with his own notions, in the *Theodicæa*, as to defend them seriously against the learned Dr. Clarke; that shews only that he angled for two different sorts of reputation, from the same performance; and unluckily he lost both. The subject was too serious to pass for a romance; and the principles too absurd to be admitted for truth.” *Mr. Baxter's appendix to his Inquiry into the nature of the human Soul*, p. 162.

VER. 303. *For Forms of Government, &c.*] These fine lines have been strangely misunderstood: the author, against his own express words, against the plain sense of his system, has been conceived to mean, That all Govern-

For Modes of Faith let graceless zealots fight; 305
His can't be wrong whose life is in the right:

COMMENTARY.

been always too apt to do in matters where *practice* makes their happiness, he cautions his reader (from *℥* 302 to 311.) against this error. The seasonableness of this reproof will appear evident enough to those who know, that mad disputes about Liberty and Prerogative had once well nigh overturned our Constitution; while others about Mystery and Church Authority had almost destroyed the very spirit of our Religion.

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ments and all Religions were, as to their forms and objects, indifferent. But as this wrong judgment proceeded from ignorance of the reason of the reproof, as explained above, that explanation is alone sufficient to rectify the mistake.

However, not to leave him under the least suspicion in a matter of so much importance, I shall justify the sense here given to this passage, more at large:

I. And first as to Society, Let us consider the words themselves: and then compare this mistaken sense with the context.

The Poet, we may observe, is here speaking, not of civil Society at large, but of a just legitimate Policy:

“Th’ according music of a *well-mix’d* State.

Now mix’d States are of various kinds; in some of which the Democratic, in others the Aristocratic, and in others the Monarchic form prevails. Now as each of these mix’d Forms is equally legitimate, as being founded on the principles of natural liberty, that man is guilty of the highest folly, who chuseth rather to employ himself in a speculative contest for the superior excellence of one of these *Forms* to the rest, than in promoting the good administration of that settled *Form* to which he is subject. And yet all our warm disputes about Government, have been

In Faith and Hope the world will disagree,
But all Mankind's concern is Charity:

N O T E S.

of this kind. Again, if by *Forms of Government*, must needs be meant legitimate Government, because that is the subject under debate; then by *Modes of Faith*, which is the correspondent idea, must needs be meant the modes or explanations of the True Faith, because the author is here too on the subject of true Religion:

“ Relum'd her ancient light, not kindled new.

Besides, the very expression (than which nothing can be more precise) confineth us to understand, by *Modes of Faith*, those human explanations of Christian Mysteries, in contesting which, zeal and ignorance have so perpetually violated Charity.

Secondly, If we consider the *context*; to suppose him to mean, that *all Forms of Government* are indifferent, is making him directly contradict the preceding paragraph; where he extols the Patriot for discriminating the *true* from the *false* modes of Government. He, says the Poet,

“ Taught Pow'rs *due* use to People and to Kings,
“ Taught not to *slack*, nor *strain* its tender strings;
“ The less and greater set so justly *true*,
“ That touching one must strike the other too;
“ 'Till jarring int'rests of themselves create
“ Th' *according* music of a *well-mix'd* State.

Here he recommendeth the true Form of Government, which is the *mix'd*. In another place he as strongly condemneth the false, or the absolute *jure divino* Form:

“ For Nature knew no *right divine* in Men.

But the Reader will not be displeased to see the Poet's own apology, as I find it written in the year 1740, in his own hand, in the margin of a book, where he found these two celebrated lines very much misapplied: “ The author of
“ these lines was far from meaning that no one form of

All must be false that thwart this One great End;
And all of God, that blest Mankind or mend. 310

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“ Government is, in itself, better than another (as, that
“ mixed or limited Monarchy, for example, is not pre-
“ ferable to absolute) but that no form of Government,
“ however excellent or preferable, in itself, can be suf-
“ ficient to make a People happy, unless it be admini-
“ stered with integrity. On the contrary, the best sort
“ of Government, when the *form* of it is preserved, and
“ the *administration* corrupt, is most dangerous.”

II. Again, to suppose the Poet to mean, that *all Reli-
gions* are indifferent, is an equally wrong as well as un-
charitable suspicion. Mr. Pope, though his subject, in
this *Essay on Man*, confineth him to Natural religion; yet
he giveth frequent intimations of a more sublime Dispen-
sation, and even of the necessity of it; particularly in his
second epistle (v 149, &c.) where he confesseth the weak-
ness and insufficiency of human Reason.

And likewise in his fourth epistle, where, speaking of
the good Man, the favourite of Heaven, he sayeth,

“ For him alone, *Hope* leads from goal to goal,
“ And opens still, and opens on his soul:
“ ’Till, lengthen’d on to *Faith*, and unconfin’d,
“ It pours the bliss that fills up all the Mind.

But Natural Religion never lengthened Hope on to Faith;
nor did any Religion, but the Christian ever conceive that
Faith could fill the mind with happiness.

Lastly, In this very epistle, and in this very place,
speaking of the great Restorers of the *religion of Nature*,
he intimates that they could only draw God’s *shadow*, not
his *image*:

“ Re-lum’d her ancient light, not kindled new,
“ If not God’s *image*, yet his *shadow* drew:

as reverencing that truth, which telleth us, this discovery
was reserved for the *glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image
of God*, 2 Cor. iv. 4.

Man, like the gen'rous vine, supported lives ;
The strength he gains is from th' embrace he gives.

COMMENTARY.

VER. 311. *Man, like the gen'rous vine, &c.*] Having thus largely considered Man in his social capacity, the Poet, in order to fix a momentous truth in the mind of his reader, concludes the epistle in recapitulating the *two Principles* which concur to the support of this part of his character, namely, SELF-LOVE and SOCIAL; and in shewing that they are only two different motions of the appetite to Good; by which the Author of Nature hath enabled Man to find his own happiness in the happiness

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VER. 305. *For Modes of Faith let graceless zealots fight ;*] These latter Ages have seen so many scandalous contentions for *modes of Faith*, to the violation of Christian Charity, and dishonour of sacred Scripture, that it is not at all strange they should become the object of so benevolent and wise an Author's resentment.

But that which he here seemed to have more particularly in his eye was the long and mischievous squabble between W—d and JACKSON, on a point confessedly above Reason, and amongst those adorable mysteries, which it is the honour of our Religion to find unfathomable. In this, by the weight of answers and replies, redoubled upon one another without mercy, they made so profound a progress, that the *One* proved, nothing hindered, in Nature, but that *the Son might have been the Father*, and the *Other*, that nothing hindered, in Grace, but that *the Son may be a mere Creature*. But if, instead of throwing so many Greek Fathers at one another's heads, they had but chanced to reflect on the sense of one Greek word, ΑΠΕΙΡΙΑ, that it signifies both INFINITY and IGNORANCE, this single *equivocation* might have saved them ten thousand, which they expended in carrying on the controversy. However those *Mists that magnified the Scene*, enlarged the Character of the

On their own Axis as the Planets run,
Yet make at once their circle round the Sun;

COMMENTARY.

of the Whole. This he illustrates with a thought as sublime as that general harmony which he describes :

“ On their own Axis as the Planets run,
“ Yet make at once their circle round the Sun:
“ So two consistent motions act the Soul;
“ And one regards Itself, and one the Whole.
“ Thus God and Nature link'd the general frame,
“ And bade Self-love and Social be the same.

For he hath the art of converting poetical ornament into philosophic reasoning; and of improving a simile into an analogical argument; of which more in our next.

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Combatants: and no body expecting *common sense* on a subject where we have no ideas, the defects of dulness disappeared, and its advantages (for, advantages it has) were all provided for.

The worst is, such kind of Writers seldom know when to have done. For writing themselves up into the same delusion with their Readers, they are apt to venture out into the more open paths of Literature, where their reputation, made out of that stuff, which Lucian calls *Σκότος ὀλόχεον*, presently falls from them, and their nakedness appears. And thus it fared with our two Worthies. The World which must have always something to amuse it, was now, and it was time, grown weary of its play-thing; and catch'd at a new object that promised them more agreeable entertainment. Tindal, a kind of Bastard-Socrates, had brought our speculations from *Heaven* to *Earth*: and, under the pretence of advancing the Antiquity of Christianity, laboured to undermine its Original. This was a controversy that required another management. Clear sense, severe reasoning, a thorough know-

So two consistent motions act the Soul; 315
And one regards Itself, and one the Whole.

Thus God and Nature link'd the gen'ral frame,
And bade Self-love and Social be the same.

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ledge of prophane and sacred Antiquity, and an intimate acquaintance with human Nature, were the qualities proper for such as engaged in this Subject. A very unpromising adventure for these metaphysical nurslings, bred up in the shade of chimeras. Yet they would needs venture out. What they got by it was only to be once well laughed at, and then forgotten. But one odd circumstance deserves to be remembered; tho' they wrote not, we may be sure, in concert, yet each attacked his Adversary at the same time; fastened upon him in the same place; and mumbled him with just the same toothless rage. But the ill success of this escape soon brought them to themselves. The One made a fruitless effort to revive the old game, in a discourse on *The importance of the doctrine of the Trinity*; and the Other has been ever since, rambling in SPACE, and TIME.

This short history, as insignificant as the subjects of it are, may not be altogether unuseful to posterity. Divines may learn by these examples to avoid the mischiefs done to Religion and Literature thro' the affectation of being *wiser* above what is written, and *knowing* beyond what can be understood.

VER. 318. *And bade Self-love and Social be the same.*] True *Self-love* is an appetite for that proper good, for the enjoyment of which, we were made as we are. Now that good is commensurate with all other good, and a part and portion of Universal Good: it is therefore the *same with Social*, which hath the same properties.

A R G U M E N T O F
E P I S T L E I V.

*Of the Nature and State of Man with respect
to Happiness.*

- I. *F A L S E* Notions of Happiness, Philosophical and Popular, answered from § 19 to 77. II. It is the End of all Men, and attainable by all, § 30. God intends Happiness to be equal; and to be so, it must be social, since all particular Happiness depends on general, and since he governs by general, not particular Laws, § 37. As it is necessary for Order, and the peace and welfare of Society, that external goods should be unequal, Happiness is not made to consist in these, § 51. But, notwithstanding that inequality, the balance of Happiness among Mankind is kept even by Providence, by the two Passions of Hope and Fear, § 70. III. What the Happiness of Individuals is, as far as is consistent with the constitution of this world; and that the good Man has here the advantage, § 77. The error of imputing to Virtue what are only the calamities of Nature, or of Fortune, § 94. IV. The folly of expecting that God should alter his general Laws in favour of particulars, § 121. V. That we are not judges who are good; but that, whoever they are, they must be happiest, § 133, &c. VI. That external goods, are not the proper rewards, but often inconsistent with, or destructive of Virtue, § 165. That even these can

make no Man happy without Virtue : Instanced in Riches, § 183. Honours, § 191. Nobility, § 203. Greatness, § 215. Fame, § 235. Superior Talents, § 257, &c. With pictures of human Infelicity in Men possessed of them all, § 267, &c. VII. That Virtue only constitutes a Happiness, whose object is universal, and whose prospect eternal, § 307, &c. That the perfection of Virtue and Happiness consists in a conformity to the ORDER of PROVIDENCE here, and a Resignation to it here and hereafter, § 326, &c.



Know then this Truth (enough for Man to know)
Virtue alone is Happiness below.

Essay on Man, Ep. IV.

EPISTLE IV.

OH HAPPINESS! our being's end and aim!
 Good, Pleasure, Ease, Content! whate'er thy
 name:

That something still which prompts th' eternal sigh,
 For which we bear to live, or dare to die,

VARIATIONS.

VER. 1. *Oh Happiness! &c.*] in the MS. thus,

Oh Happiness! to which we all aspire,
 Wing'd with strong hope, and borne by full desire;
 That ease, for which in want, in wealth we sigh;
 That ease, for which we labour and we die.

COMMENTARY.

THE two foregoing epistles having considered Man with regard to the MEANS (that is, in all his relations, whether as an Individual, or a Member of *Society*) this last comes to consider him with regard to the END, that is, *Happiness*.

It opens with an Invocation to HAPPINESS, in the manner of the ancient Poets; who, when destitute of a patron God, applied to the Muse; and, if she was engaged, took up with any simple Virtue next at hand, to inspire and prosper their Undertakings. This was the ancient Invocation, which few modern Poets have had the art to imitate with any degree either of spirit or decorum: but our author hath contrived to make *his* subservient to the method and reasoning of his philosophic composition. I will endeavour to explain so uncommon a beauty.

Which still so near us, yet beyond us lies, 5
 O'erlook'd, seen double, by the fool, and wise.
 Plant of celestial seed ! if dropt below,
 Say, in what mortal soil thou deign'st to grow ?

C O M M E N T A R Y .

It is to be observed that the pagan Deities had each their several *names* and *places of abode* ; with some of which they were supposed to be more delighted than others ; and consequently to be then most propitious when invoked by the favourite name and place : Hence we find, the hymns of Homer, Orpheus, and Callimachus to be chiefly employed in reckoning up the several titles and habitations by which the patron God was distinguished. Our Poet hath made these two circumstances serve to introduce his subject. His purpose is to write of *Happiness* ; method therefore requires that he first define what men mean by happiness ; and this he does in the ornament of a poetic Invocation ; in which the several names, that *Happiness* goes by, are enumerated.

“ Oh Happiness ! our being's end and aim,
 “ Good, Pleasure, Ease, Content ! whate'er thy Name.

After the DEFINITION, that which follows, is the PROPOSITION, which is *that human Happiness consists not in external Advantages, but in Virtue*. For the subject of this epistle is the detecting the *false* notions of Happiness, and settling and explaining the *true* ; and this, the Poet lays down in the next sixteen lines. Now the enumeration of the several *situations* where Happiness is supposed to re-

N O T E S .

VER. 6. O'erlook'd, seen double,] O'erlook'd by those who place Happiness in any thing exclusive of Virtue ; *seen double* by those who admit any thing else to have a share with Virtue in procuring Happiness ; these being the two general mistakes which this epistle is employed to confute.

Fair op'ning to some Court's propitious shine,
 Or deep with di'monds in the flaming mine? 10
 Twin'd with the wreaths Parnassian lawrels yield,
 Or reap'd in iron harvests of the field?
 Where grows?—where grows it not? If vain our toil,
 We ought to blame the culture, not the soil:
 Fix'd to no spot is happiness sincere, 15
 'Tis no where to be found, or ev'ry where:
 'Tis never to be bought, but always free,
 And fled from monarchs, ST. JOHN! dwells with thee.
 Ask of the Learn'd the way? The Learn'd are blind;
 This bids to serve, and that to shun mankind; 20

COMMENTARY.

side, is a summary of *false* happiness placed in Externals:

- “ Plant of celestial seed! if dropt below,
- “ Say, in what mortal soil thou deign'st to grow?
- “ Fair op'ning to some Court's propitious shine,
- “ Or deep with Di'monds in the flaming mine?
- “ 'Twin'd with the wreaths Parnassian laurels yield,
- “ Or reap'd in iron harvests of the field?

The six remaining lines deliver the *true* notion of Happiness to be in Virtue. Which is summed up in these two:

- “ Fix'd to no spot is Happiness sincere;
- “ 'Tis no where to be found, or ev'ry where.

The Poet having thus defined his terms, and laid down his proposition, proceeds to the support of his Thesis; the various arguments of which make up the body of the Epistle.

VER. 19. *Ask of the Learn'd, &c.*] He begins (from v 18 to 29.) with detecting the false notions of Happiness. These are of two kinds, the *Philosophical* and *Popular*:

Some place the blifs in action, fome in eafe,
 Thofe call it Pleafure, and Contentment thefe;

C O M M E N T A R Y .

The popular he had recapitulated in the invocation, when Happinefs was called upon, at her feveral fupposed places of abode: the philofophical only remained to be delivered:

“ Ask of the Learn’d the way? the Learn’d are blind;

“ This bids to ferve, and that to fhun Mankind:

“ Some place the blifs in action, fome in eafe;

“ Thofe call it Pleafure, and Contentment thefe.

They differed as well in the *means*, as in the nature of the *end*. Some placed happinefs in action, fome in contemplation; the firft called it pleafure, the fecond eafe. Of thofe who placed it in action and called it pleafure, the rout they purfued either funk them into *fenfual pleafures*, which ended in *Pain*; or led them in fearch of *imaginary perfections*, unfuitable to their nature and ftation, (fee Ep. i.) which ended in *Vanity*. Of thofe who placed it in eafe, the contemplative ftation they were fixed in, made fome, for their quiet, find truth in *every thing*; others in *nothing*.

“ Who thus define it, fay they more or lefs

“ Than this, that Happinefs is Happinefs?

The confutation of thefe Philofophic errors he fhews to be very eafy, one common fallacy running through them all; namely this, that inftead of telling us in what the happinefs of *human nature* confifts, which was what was asked of them, each bufies himfelf in explaining in what he placed *his own*.

N O T E S .

VER. 21, 23. *Some place the blifs in action,—*

Some funk to beafts, &c.]

1. Thofe who place Happinefs, or the *summum bonum*, in Pleafure, ἡδονή; fuch as the Cyrenaic feft, called, on that account, the Hedonic. 2. Thofe who place it in a

Some sunk to Beasts, find pleasure end in pain;
 Some swell'd to Gods, confess ev'n Virtue vain;
 Or indolent, to each extreme they fall, 25
 To trust in ev'ry thing, or doubt of all.

Who thus define it, say they more or less
 Than this, that Happiness is Happiness?

Take Nature's path, and mad Opinion's leave;
 All states can reach it, and all heads conceive; 30

COMMENTARY.

VER. 29. *Take Nature's path, &c.*] The Poet then proceeds (from v 28 to 35.) to reform their mistakes; and shews them that, if they will but take the road of Nature and leave that of mad Opinion, they will soon find Hap-

NOTES.

certain tranquillity or calmness of Mind, which they call *Εὐθυμία*, such as the Democritic sect. 3. The Epicurean. 4. The Stoic. 5. The Protagorean, which held that Man was *πάντων χρημάτων μέτρον*, *the measure of all things*; for that all things which *appear* to him, *are*, and those things which *appear not* to any Man, *are not*; so that every imagination or opinion of every man was true. 6. The Sceptic: Whose absolute doubt is, with great judgment, said to be the effect of indolence, as well as the absolute trust of the Protagorean: For the same dread of labour attending the search of truth, which makes the Protagorean presume it is always at hand, makes the Sceptic to conclude it is never to be found. The only difference is, that the laziness of the one is desponding, and the laziness of the other sanguine; yet both can give it a good name, and call it HAPPINESS.

VER. 23. *Some sunk to Beasts, &c.*] These four lines added in the last Edition, as necessary to complete the summary of the false pursuits after happiness amongst the greek Philosophers.

Obvious her goods, in no extreme they dwell;
 There needs but thinking right, and meaning well;
 And mourn our various portions as we please,
 Equal is Common Sense, and Common Ease.

Remember, Man, “the Universal Cause 35
 “Acts not by partial, but by gen’ral laws;”
 And makes what Happiness we justly call
 Subsist not in the good of one, but all.
 There’s not a blessing Individuals find,
 But some way leans and hearkens to the kind; 40
 No Bandit fierce, no Tyrant mad with pride,
 No cavern’d Hermit, rests self-satisfy’d:

C O M M E N T A R Y.

piness to be a good of the *species*, and, like Common Sense, equally distributed to all mankind.

VER. 35. *Remember, Man, &c.*] Having exposed the two false species of Happiness, the *Philosophical* and *Popular*, and denounced the true; in order to establish the last he goes on to a confutation of the two former.

I. He first (from v 34 to 49.) confutes the *Philosophical*; which, as we said, makes happiness a particular, not a general good: And this two ways; 1. From his grand principle, that God acts by general laws; the consequence of which is, that happiness, which supports the well-being of every system, must needs be universal; and not partial, as the Philosophers conceived. 2. From fact, that Man instinctively concurs with this designation of Providence, to make happiness universal, by his having no delight in any thing uncommunicated or uncommunicable.

N O T E S.

VER. 35. *Remember, Man!* “the Universal Cause,
 “Acts not by partial, but by gen’ral laws;”]
 I reckon it nothing that M. Du Resnel saw none of the

Who most to shun or hate Mankind pretend,
 Seek an admirer, or would fix a friend:
 Abstract what others feel, what others think, 45
 All pleasures sicken, and all glories sink:
 Each has his share; and who would more obtain,
 Shall find, the pleasure pays not half the pain.

ORDER is Heav'n's first law; and this confess,
 Some are, and must be, greater than the rest, 50
 More rich, more wise; but who infers from hence
 That such are happier, shocks all common sense.
 Heav'n to Mankind impartial we confess,
 If all are equal in their Happiness:

VARIATIONS.

After v 52. in the MS.

Say not, "Heav'n's here profuse, there poorly saves,
 "And for one Monarch makes a thousand slaves."
 You'll find, when Causes and their Ends are known,
 'Twas for the thousand Heav'n has made that one.

COMMENTARY.

VER. 49. *Order is Heav'n's first law;*] II. In the second place (from v 48 to 67.) he confutes the popular error concerning happiness, namely, that it consists in exter-

NOTES.

fine reasoning from these two lines, to ver. 73. in which the Poet confutes both the *philosophic* and *popular* errors concerning happiness; what I can least bear is his perverting these two lines to a horrid and senseless *fatalism*, foreign to the argument in hand, and directly contrary to the Poet's general principles.

But mutual wants this Happiness increase; 55
 All Nature's diff'rence keeps all Nature's peace.
 Condition, circumstance is not the thing;
 Bliss is the same in subject or in king,
 In who obtain defence, or who defend,
 In him who is, or him who finds a friend : 60
 Heav'n breathes thro' ev'ry member of the whole
 One common blessing, as one common soul.

C O M M E N T A R Y.

nals: This he does, *first*, by inquiring into the reasons of the present providential disposition of external goods: A topic of confutation chosen with the greatest accuracy and penetration: For, if it appears they were distributed in the manner we see them, for reasons different from the happiness of Individuals, it is absurd to think that they should make part of that happiness.

N O T E S.

“ Une Loi generale

“ Determine toujours la cause principale.

i. e. *a general Law always determines the first Cause*: which is the very *Fate* of the Ancient Pagans; who supposed that the *Destinies* gave law to the *Father of Gods and men*. The Poet says, again, soon after, ver. 49. “ Order is Heaven's first Law,—i. e. *the first Law made by God relates to order*: which is a beautiful allusion to the Scripture-history of the Creation, when God first appeased the disorders of Chaos, and separated the light from the darkness. Let us now hear his Translator,

“ L' Ordre, cet inflexible et grand Legislatteur,

“ Qui des decrets du Ciel est le premier Auteur.

Order, that inflexible and grand Legislator, who is the first Author of the Law of Heaven. A proposition, abominable in most senses; absurd in all.

But Fortune's gifts if each alike possess,
 And each were equal, must not all contest?
 If then to all Men Happiness was meant,
 God in Externals could not place Content.

65

Fortune her gifts may variously dispose,
 And these be happy call'd, unhappy those;

VARIATIONS.

After v 66. in the MS.

'Tis peace of mind alone is at a stay:
 The rest mad Fortune gives or takes away.
 All other blifs by accident's debar'd;
 But Virtue's, in the instant, a reward;
 In hardest trials operates the best,
 And more is relish'd as the more distrest.

COMMENTARY.

He shews therefore, that disparity of external possessions among men was for the sake of Society: 1. To promote the harmony and happiness of a system; because the want of external goods in some, and the abundance in others, increase general harmony in the obliger and obliged. Yet here (says he) mark the impartial wisdom of Heaven; this very inequality of externals, by contributing to general harmony and order, produceth an equality of happiness amongst Individuals.

2. To prevent perpetual discord amongst men equal in power; which an equal distribution of external goods would necessarily occasion. From hence he concludes, that, as external goods were not given for the reward of virtue, but for many different purposes, God could not, if he intended happiness for all, place it in the enjoyment of externals.

VER. 67. *Fortune her gifts may variously dispose,*] His second argument (from v 66 to 73.) against the popular er-

But Heav'n's just balance equal will appear,
 While those are plac'd in Hope, and these in Fear: 70
 Not present good or ill, the joy or curse,
 But future views of better, or of worse.

Oh sons of earth! attempt ye still to rise,
 By mountains pil'd on mountains, to the skies?
 Heav'n still with laughter the vain toil surveys, 75
 And buries madmen in the heaps they raise.

Know, all the good that individuals find,
 Or God and Nature meant to mere Mankind,

COMMENTARY.

ror of happiness being placed in externals, is, that the possession of them is inseparably attended with fear; the want of them with hope; which directly crossing all their pretensions to making happy, evidently shews that God had placed happiness elsewhere. And hence, in concluding this argument, he takes occasion (from v 72 to 77.) to upbraid the desperate folly and impiety of those, who, in spite of God and Nature, will yet attempt to place happiness in externals:

“ Oh sons of earth! attempt ye still to rise,
 “ By mountains pil'd on mountains, to the skies?
 “ Heav'n still with laughter the vain toil surveys,
 “ And buries madmen in the heaps they raise.

VER. 77. *Know all the good, &c.*] The Poet having thus confuted the two errors concerning happiness, the *Philosophical* and *Popular*; and proved that true happiness was neither solitary and partial, nor yet placed in externals; goes on (from v 76 to 83.) to shew in what it doth consist. He had before said in general, and repeated it, that happiness lay in common to the whole species. He now brings us better acquainted with it, in a more explicate account of its nature; and tells us, it is all contained in *health*,

Reason's whole pleasure, all the joys of Sense,
 Lie in three words, Health, Peace, and Competence.
 But Health consists with Temperance alone; 81
 And Peace, oh Virtue! Peace is all thy own.
 The good or bad the gifts of Fortune gain;
 But these less taste them, as they worse obtain.

COMMENTARY.

peace, and competence; but that these are to be gain'd only by VIRTUE, namely, by temperance, innocence, and industry.

VER. 83. *The good or bad, &c.*] Hitherto the Poet hath only considered *health* and *peace*:

“ But Health consists with Temperance alone;

“ And Peace, oh Virtue! Peace is all thy own.

One head yet remained to be spoken to, namely *competence*. In the pursuit of health and peace there is no danger of running into excess; but the case is different with regard to competence: here wealth and affluence would

NOTES.

VER. 79. *Reason's whole pleasure, &c.*] This is a beautiful periphrasis for Happiness; for all we feel of good is by *sensation* and *reflection*. But the Translator, who seemed little to concern himself with the Poet's philosophy or argument, mistook this description of *happiness* for a description of the *intellectual* and *sensitive faculties*, opposed to one another; and therefore turns it thus,

“ Le charme seducteur, dont s'enyvrant les sens,

“ Les plaisirs de l'esprit, encore plus ravissans:

and so, with the highest absurdity, not only makes the Poet constitute *sensual excesses* a part of human happiness, but likewise the product of Virtue.

VER. 82. *And Peace, &c.*] *Conscious Innocence* (says the Poet) is the only source of *internal peace*; and *known* innocence, of *external*; therefore, peace is the sole issue of

Say, in pursuit of profit or delight, 85
Who risk the most, that take wrong means or right?
Of Vice or Virtue, whether blest or curst,
Which meets contempt, or which compassion first?
Count all th' advantage prosp'rous Vice attains,
'Tis but what Virtue flies from and disdains: 90
And grant the bad what happiness they wou'd,
One they must want, which is, to pass for good.

VARIATIONS.

After ψ 92. in the MS.

Let sober Moralists correct their speech,
No bad man's happy: he is great, or rich.

COMMENTARY.

be too apt to be mistaken for it, in mens passionate pursuit after *external* goods. To obviate this mistake therefore, the Poet shews (from y 82 to 93.) that, as exorbitant wealth adds nothing to the happiness arising from a *competence*; so, as it is generally ill-gotten, it is attended with circumstances which weaken another part of this triple cord, namely *peace*.

“ Reason’s whole pleasure, all the joys of Sense,
“ Lie in three words, Health, Peace, and Competence.
“ But Health consists in Temperance alone;
“ And Peace, oh Virtue! Peace is all thy own.

NOTES.

virtue; or, in his own emphatic words, *peace is all thy own*; a conclusive observation in his argument; which stands thus; Is happiness rightly placed in externals? No; for it consists in health, peace, and competence. Health and competence are the product of temperance; and peace of perfect innocence.

Oh, blind to truth, and God's whole scheme below,
 Who fancy Blifs to Vice, to Virtue Woe!
 Who sees and follows that great scheme the best, 95
 Best knows the blessing, and will most be blest.
 But fools, the Good alone, unhappy call,
 For ills or accidents that chance to all.

COMMENTARY.

VER. 93. *Oh blind to truth, &c.*] Our Author having thus largely confuted the mistake of happiness's consisting in externals, proceeds to expose the terrible consequences of such an opinion, on the sentiments and practice of all sorts of men; making the Dissolute, impious and atheistical; the Religious, uncharitable and intolerant; and the Good, restless and discontent. For when it is once taken for granted, that happiness consists in externals, it is immediately seen that ill men are often more happy than good; which sets all conditions on objecting to the ways of Providence: and some, even on rashly attempting to rectify its dispensations, though by the violation of all law, divine and human. Now this being the most momentous part of the subject under consideration, is deservedly treated most at large. And here it will be proper to take notice of the art of the Poet in making this confutation serve, at the same time, for a full solution of all objections which might be made to his main proposition, *that happiness consists not in externals*.

I. He begins, first of all with the atheistical complainers; and pursues their impiety, from v 93 to 131.

“Oh! blind to truth! and God's whole scheme below, &c.

VER. 97. *But fools the good alone unhappy call, &c.*] He exposes their folly, even on their own notions of external goods.

1. By examples (from v 98 to 111.) where he shews *first*, that if good men have been untimely cut off, this is not to be ascribed to their virtues, but to a contempt of

See FALKLAND dies, the virtuous and the just !
 See god-like TURENNE prostrate on the dust ! 100
 See SIDNEY bleeds amid the martial strife !
 Was this their Virtue, or Contempt of Life ?
 Say, was it Virtue, more tho' Heav'n ne'er gave,
 Lamented DIGBY ! sunk thee to the grave ?
 Tell me, if Virtue made the Son expire, 105
 Why, full of days and honour lives the Sire ?
 Why drew Marseille's good bishop purer breath,
 When Nature sicken'd, and each gale was death !
 Or why so long (in life if long can be)
 Lent Heav'n a parent to the poor and me ? 110

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life, which hurried them into dangers. *Secondly*, That if they will still persist in ascribing untimely death, to virtue, they must needs, on the same principle, ascribe long life to it also ; consequently, as the argument, in fact, concludes both ways, in logic it concludes neither.

N O T E S .

VER. 100. *See god-like Turenne*] This epithet has a peculiar justness ; the great man to whom it is applied not being distinguished, from other generals, for any of his superior qualities so much as for his providential care of those whom he led to war ; which was so uncommon, that his chief purpose in taking on himself the command of armies, seems to have been the Preservation of Mankind. In this *god-like* care he was more distinguishably employed throughout the whole course of that famous campaign in which he lost his life.

VER. 110 *Lent heav'n a parent, &c.*] This last instance of the Poet's illustration of the ways of Providence, the

What makes all physical or moral ill?
 There deviates Nature, and here wanders Will.
 God sends not ill; if rightly understood,
 Or partial Ill is universal Good,
 Or Change admits, or Nature lets it fall; 115
 Short, and but rare, till Man improv'd it all.

VARIATIONS.

After ψ 116. in the MS.

Of ev'ry evil, since the world began,
 The real source is not in God, but man.

COMMENTARY.

“ Say, was it Virtue, more tho' Heav'n ne'er gave,
 “ Lamented Digby! sunk thee to the grave?
 “ Tell me, if Virtue made the Son expire,
 “ Why, full of days and honour lives the Sire?

VER. III. *What makes all physical or moral ill?*] 2. He exposes their folly (from ψ 100 to 131.) by considerations drawn from the system of Nature; and these twofold, natural and moral. You accuse God, says he, because the good man is subject to natural and moral evil. Let us see whence these proceed: Natural evil is the necessary consequence of a material world so constituted: But that this constitution was best, we have proved in the first Epistle. Moral evil ariseth from the depraved will of Man: Therefore neither the one nor the other from God.

NOTES.

reader sees, has a peculiar elegance; where a tribute of piety to a parent is paid in a return of thanks to, and made subservient of, his vindication of, the great Giver and Father of all things. The mother of the Author, a person of great piety and charity, died the year this poem was finished, viz. 1733.

We just as wisely might of Heav'n complain
 That righteous Abel was destroy'd by Cain,
 As that the virtuous son is ill at ease
 When his lewd father gave the dire disease. 120
 Think we, like some weak Prince, th' Eternal Cause,
 Prone for his fav'rites to reverse his laws?

Shall burning Ætna, if a sage requires,
 Forget to thunder, and recall her fires?

C O M M E N T A R Y .

But you say (adds the Poet, to these impious complainers) that though it be fit, Man should suffer the miseries which he brings upon himself, by the commission of moral evil; yet it seems unfit that his innocent posterity should bear a share of the burthen. To this, says he, I reply,

“ We just as wisely might of Heav'n complain,

“ That righteous Abel was destroy'd by Cain;

“ As that the virtuous son is ill at ease,

“ When his lewd father gave the dire disease.

But you will still say, why doth not God either prevent, or immediately repair these evils? You may as well ask

N O T E S .

VER. 121. *Think we, like some weak Prince, &c.*] Agreeably hereunto, holy Scripture, in its account of things under the common Providence of Heaven, never represents miracles as wrought for the sake of him who is the object of them, but in order to give credit to some of God's extraordinary dispensations to Mankind.

VER. 123. *Shall burning Ætna, &c.*] Alluding to the fate of those two great Naturalists, Empedocles and Pliny; who both perished by too near an approach to Ætna and Vesuvius, while they were exploring the cause of their eruptions.

On air or sea new motions be imprest, 125

Oh blameless Bethel! to relieve thy breast?

When the loose mountain trembles from on high,

Shall gravitation cease, if you go by?

Or some old temple, nodding to its fall,

For Chartres' head reserve the hanging wall? 130

But still this world (so fitted for the knave)

Contents us not. A better shall we have!

COMMENTARY.

why he doth not work continual miracles, and every moment reverse the established laws of Nature:

“ Shall burning *Ætna*, if a sage requires, &c.

This is the force of the Poet's reasoning; and these the men to whom he addresseth it; namely, the libertine cavillers against Providence.

VER. 131. *But still this world, &c.*] II. But now, so unhappy is the condition of our corrupt nature, that these are not the only complainers. RELIGIOUS men are but too apt, if not to speak out, yet sometimes secretly to murmur against Providence; and say, its ways are not equal; Those especially, who are more inordinately devoted to a sect or party, are scandalized that the Just (for such they esteem themselves) who are to judge the world, have no better portion in their own inheritance: The Poet therefore now leaves those more profligate complainers, and turns (from *ψ* 130 to 149.) to the religious, in these words:

“ But still this world (so fitted for the knave) &c.

As the more Impious wanted external goods to be the reward of virtue for the moral man; so These want them for the pious, in order to have a kingdom of the Just: To this the Poet holds it sufficient to answer; Pray first agree among yourselves, who those Just are.

A kingdom of the Just then let it be :
 But first consider how those Just agree.
 The good must merit God's peculiar care ; 135
 But who, but God, can tell us who they are ?
 One thinks on Calvin Heav'n's own spirit fell ;
 Another deems him instrument of hell ;
 If Calvin feel Heav'n's blessing, or its rod,
 This cries there is, and that, there is no God. 140
 What shocks one part will edify the rest,
 Nor with one system can they all be blest.
 The very best will variously incline,
 And what rewards your Virtue, punish mine.

V A R I A T I O N S .

After v 142. in some Editions,

Give each a System, all must be at strife ;
 What diff'rent Systems for a Man and Wife ?

The joke, tho' lively, was ill plac'd, and therefore struck out of the text.

C O M M E N T A R Y .

As they are not likely to do this, he bids them rest satisfied ; remember his fundamental principle, that *whatever is, is right* ; and content themselves (as their religion teaches them to profess a more than ordinary submission to the will of Providence) with that common answer which he, with so much reason and piety, gives to every kind of complainer.

However, though there be yet no *kingdom of the Just*, there is still no kingdom of the Unjust ; both the virtuous and the vicious (whatsoever becomes of those whom every sect calls the Faithful) have their shares in external goods ; and what is more, the virtuous have infinitely the greatest enjoyment of them.

WHATEVER IS, IS RIGHT.—This world, 'tis true,
 Was made for Cæsar — but for Titus too: 146
 And which more blest? who chain'd his country? say,
 Or he whose Virtue sigh'd to lose a day?

“ But sometimes Virtue starves, while Vice is fed.”
 What then? Is the reward of Virtue bread? 150
 That, Vice may merit, 'tis the price of toil;
 The knave deserves it, when he tills the soil,

COMMENTARY.

“ This world, 'tis true,
 “ Was made for Cæsar — but for Titus too :
 “ And which more blest? who chain'd his country? say,
 “ Or he whose Virtue sigh'd to lose a day?

I have been the more solicitous to explain this last argument, and to shew *against whom* it is directed, because a great deal depends upon it for the illustration of the sense, and the defence of the Poet's reasoning. For if we suppose him to be still addressing himself to those IMPIOUS complainers, confuted in the forty preceding lines, we should make him guilty of a paralogism, in the argument about the Just; and in the illustration of it by the case of Calvin. For then the Libertine asks, Why the Just, that is, the *moral man*, is not rewarded? The answer is, That none but God can tell, who the Just, that is, the *faithful man*, is. Where the Term is changed, in order to support the argument; for about the truly moral man there is no dispute; about the truly faithful, or the orthodox, a great deal. But take the Poet right, as arguing here against RELIGIOUS complainers, and the reasoning is strict and logical. They ask, Why the truly faithful are not rewarded? he answereth, “ They may be, for aught you know; for none but God can tell who they are.”

VER. 149. “*But sometimes Virtue starves, while Vice is fed.*”]
 III. The Poet, having dispatched these two species of mur-

The knave deserves it, when he tempts the main,
Where folly fights for kings, or dives for gain.

The good man may be weak, be indolent; 155

Nor is his claim to plenty, but content.

But grant him riches, your demand is o'er?

“ No — shall the good want Health, the good want
Pow'r? ”

Add Health, and Pow'r, and ev'ry earthly thing,

“ Why bounded Pow'r? why private? why no king? ”

Nay, why external for internal giv'n? 161

Why is not Man a God, and Earth a Heav'n?

Who ask and reason thus, will scarce conceive

God gives enough, while he has more to give:

Immense the pow'r, immense were the demand; 165

Say, at what part of nature will they stand?

COMMENTARY.

murers, comes now to the third, and still more pardonable sort, the *discontented* GOOD MEN, who lament only that Virtue starves, while Vice riots. To these he replies (from *℣* 148 to 157.) that, admit this to be the case, yet they have no reason to complain, either of the good man's lot in particular, or of the dispensation of Providence in general. Not of the former, because happiness, the reward of virtue, consisteth not in externals; nor of the latter, because ill men may gain wealth by commendable industry; good men want necessities through indolence or bad conduct.

VER. 157. *But grant him Riches, &c.*] But as modest as this complaint seemeth at first view, the Poet next shews (from *℣* 156 to 167.) that it is founded on a principle of the *highest extravagance*, which will never let the discon-

What nothing earthly gives, or can destroy,
 The soul's calm sun-shine, and the heart-felt joy,
 Is Virtue's prize: A better would you fix?
 Then give Humility a coach and fix, 170
 Justice a Conq'ror's sword, or Truth a gown,
 Or Public Spirit its great cure, a Crown.
 Weak, foolish man! will Heav'n reward us there
 With the same trash mad mortals wish for here?
 The Boy and Man an individual makes, 175
 Yet sigh'st thou now for apples and for cakes?

VARIATIONS.

After $\S$ 172. in the MS.

Say, what rewards this idle world imparts,
 Or fit for searching heads or honest hearts.

COMMENTARY.

tented good man rest, till he becomes as vain and foolish in his imaginations as the very worst sort of complainers. For that when once he begins to think he wants what is his due, he will never know where to stop, while God hath any thing to give.

VER. 167. *What nothing earthly gives, &c.*] But this is not all; the Poet sheweth next (from $\S$ 166 to 185.) that these demands are not only unreasonable, but in the highest degree absurd, likewise. For that those very goods, if granted, would be the destruction of that virtue for which they are demanded as a reward. He concludes therefore, on the whole, that,

“ What nothing earthly gives, or can destroy,
 “ The soul's calm sun-shine, and the heart-felt joy,
 “ Is Virtue's prize—

And that to aim at other, which not only is of no use to us here, but, what is more, will be of none hereafter, is a

Go, like the Indian, in another life
 Expect thy dog, thy bottle, and thy wife:
 As well as dream such trifles are assign'd,
 As toys and empires, for a god-like mind. 180
 Rewards, that either would to Virtue bring
 No joy, or be destructive of the thing:
 How oft by these at fixty are undone
 The virtues of a saint at twenty-one!
 To whom can Riches give Repute, or Trust, 185
 Content, or Pleasure, but the Good and Just?

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passion like that of an Infant or a Savage; where the one is impatient for what he will soon despise; and the other makes a provision for what he can never want.

VER. 185. *To whom can Riches give Repute, or Trust,*] The Poet now enters more at large upon the matter: And still continuing his discourse to this third sort of complainers (whom he indulgeth, as much more pardonable than the first or second, in rectifying all their doubts and mistakes) he proves, both from reason and example, how unable any of those things are, which the world most admires, to make a good man, happy. For as to the philosophic mistakes concerning happiness, there being little danger of their making a general impression, he had, af-

N O T E S.

VER. 177. *Go, like the Indian, &c.*] Alluding to the example of the Indian, in Epist. i. v. 99. which shews, that that example was not given to discredit any rational hopes of future happiness, but only to reprove the folly of separating them from charity: as when

“ — Zeal, not Charity, became the guide,

“ And hell was built on spite, and heav'n on pride.

Judges and Senates have been bought for gold,
 Esteem and Love were never to be sold.
 Oh fool! to think God hates the worthy mind,
 The lover and the love of human-kind, 190

COMMENTARY.

ter a short confutation, dismissed them for altogether. But external goods are those Syrens, which so bewitch the world with dreams of happiness, that it is of all things the most difficult to awaken it out of its delusions; though, as he proves in an exact review of the most pretending, they dishonour bad men, and add no lustre to the good. — That it is only this third, and least criminal sort of complainers, against which the remaining part of the discourse is levelled, appeareth from the Poet's so frequently addressing himself, henceforward, to his friend.

I. He beginneth therefore (from γ 184 to 205.) with considering RICHES. 1. He examines first, what there is of real use or enjoyment in them; and sheweth, they can give the good man only that very contentment and that very esteem and love which he had before: And scornfully cries out to those of a different opinion,

“ Oh fool! to think God hates the worthy mind,
 “ The lover and the love of human-kind,
 “ Whose life is healthful, and whose conscience clear,
 “ Because he wants a thousand pounds a year!

2. He next examines the imaginary value of riches, as the fountain of honour. For his adversaries objection standeth thus:—As honour is the genuine claim of virtue; and shame the just retribution of vice; and as honour, in their opinion, follows riches; and shame, poverty; therefore the good man should be *rich*. He tells them in this they are much mistaken:

“ Honour and shame from no condition rise;
 “ Act well your part, there all the honour lies.

What power then has Fortune over the Man? None at all;

Whose life is healthful, and whose conscience clear,
Because he wants a thousand pounds a year.

Honour and shame from no Condition rise;
Act well your part, there all the honour lies.

Fortune in Men has some small diff'rence made, 195

One flaunts in rags, one flutters in brocade;

The cobbler apron'd, and the parson gown'd,

The frier hooded, and the monarch crown'd.

“What differ more (you cry) than crown and cowl!”

I'll tell you, friend! a wise man and a fool. 200

You'll find, if once the monarch acts the monk,

Or, cobbler-like, the parson will be drunk,

Worth makes the man, and want of it, the fellow;

The rest is all but leather or prunella. 204

Stuck o'er with titles and hung round with strings,
That thou may'st be by kings, or whores of kings.

COMMENTARY.

for as her favours can confer neither worth nor wisdom;
so neither can her displeasure cure him of any of his follies.
On his garb, indeed, she hath some little influence; but
his heart still remains the same:

“Fortune in Men has some small diff'rence made,

“One flaunts in rags, one flutters in brocade.

But this *difference* extends no further than to the habit;
the pride of heart is the same both in the *flaunter* and the
flutterer; as it is the Poet's intention to insinuate by the
use of those terms.

VER. 205. *Stuck o'er with titles, &c.*] II. Then as to
NOBILITY, by creation or birth; this too the Poet shews
(from v 204 to 217.) is in itself as devoid of all real worth

Boast the pure blood of an illustrious race,
 In quiet flow from Lucrece to Lucrece:
 But by your father's worth if your's you rate,
 Count me those only who were good and great. 210
 Go; if your ancient, but ignoble blood
 Has crept thro' scoundrels ever since the flood,
 Go! and pretend your family is young;
 Nor own, your fathers have been fools so long.
 What can ennoble fots, or slaves, or cowards? 215
 Alas! not all the blood of all the HOWARDS.

Look next on Greatness; say where Greatness lies.
 "Where, but among the Heroes and the Wise?"

VARIATIONS.

VER. 207. *Boast the pure blood, &c.*] in the MS. thus,
 The richest blood, right-honourably old,
 Down from Lucretia to Lucretia roll'd,
 May swell thy heart and gallop in thy breast,
 Without one dash of usher or of priest:
 Thy pride as much despise all other pride
 As Christ-Church once all colleges beside.

COMMENTARY.

as the rest; because, in the first case, the Title is generally gain'd by no merit at all; in the second, by the merit of the first Founder of the family; which when reflected on, is generally the subject rather of mortification than glory.

VER. 217. *Look next on Greatness; &c.*] III. The Poet now unmask (from y 216 to 237.) the false pretences of GREATNESS; whereby it is seen that the *Hero* and the *Politician* (the two characters which would monopolize that quality) do, after all their bustle, if they want virtue,

Heroes are much the same, the point's agreed,
 From Macedonia's madman to the Swede; 220
 The whole strange purpose of their lives, to find
 Or make, an enemy of all mankind!
 Not one looks backward, onward still he goes,
 Yet ne'er looks forward further than his nose.
 No less alike the Politic and Wise; 225
 All fly slow things, with circumspective eyes;
 Men in their loose unguarded hours they take,
 Not that themselves are wise, but others weak.
 But grant that those can conquer, these can cheat;
 'Tis phrase absurd to call a Villain Great: 230
 Who wickedly is wise, or madly brave,
 Is but the more a fool, the more a knave.
 Who noble ends by noble means obtains,
 Or failing, smiles in exile or in chains,

COMMENTARY.

effect only this, that the one proves himself a fool, and the other a knave: And virtue they but too generally want; the art of heroism being understood to consist in ravage and desolation; and the art of Politics, in circumvention.

It is not success, therefore, that constitutes true Greatness; but the end aimed at, and the means which are employed: And if these be right, Glory will be the reward, whatever be the issue;

- “ Who noble ends by noble means obtains,
- “ Or failing, smiles in exile or in chains,
- “ Like good Aurelius let him reign, or bleed
- “ Like Socrates, that man is great indeed.

Like good Aurelius let him reign, or bleed 235

Like Socrates, that Man is great indeed.

What's Fame? a fancy'd life in others breath,
A thing beyond us, ev'n before our death.

Just what you hear, you have, and what's unknown
The same (my Lord) if Tully's, or your own. 240

All that we feel of it begins and ends
In the small circle of our foes or friends;

To all beside as much an empty shade
An Eugene living, as a Cæsar dead:

Alike or when, or where, they shone, or shine, 245
Or on the Rubicon, or on the Rhine.

A Wit's a feather, and a Chief a rod;
An honest Man's the noble work of God.

Fame but from death a villain's name can save,
As Justice tears his body from the grave; 250

When what t'oblivion better were resign'd,
Is hung on high, to poison half mankind.

All fame is foreign, but of true desert;
Plays round the head, but comes not to the heart:

COMMENTARY.

VER. 237. *What's Fame?*] IV. With regard to FAME, that still more fantastic blessing, He sheweth (from v 236 to 259.) that all of it, besides what we hear ourselves, is merely nothing: and that even of this small portion, no more of it giveth the possessor a real satisfaction, than what is the fruit of virtue. Thus he shews, that Honour, Nobility, Greatness, Glory, so far as they have any thing real and substantial, that is, so far as they contribute to the

One self-approving hour whole years outweighs 255
 Of stupid starers, and of loud huzzas;
 And more true joy Marcellus exil'd feels,
 Than Cæsar with a senate at his heels.

In Parts superior what advantage lies?
 Tell (for You can) what is it to be wise? 260
 'Tis but to know how little can be known;
 To see all others faults, and feel our own:
 Condemn'd in bus'ness or in arts to drudge,
 Without a second, or without a judge:
 Truths would you teach, or save a sinking land? 265
 All fear, none aid you, and few understand.
 Painful preheminance! yourself to view
 Above life's weakness, and its comforts too.

COMMENTARY.

happiness of the possessor, are the sole issue of virtue; and that neither Riches, Courts, Armies, nor the Populace, are capable of conferring them.

VER. 259. *In Parts superior what advantage lies?*] V. But lastly, the Poet shews (from v 258 to 269.) that as *no external* goods can make man happy, so neither is it in the power of *all internal*. For that even SUPERIOR PARTS bring no more real happiness to the possessor than the rest; nay, that they put him into a worse condition; for that the quickness of apprehension and depth of penetration do but sharpen the miseries of life.

NOTES.

VER. 267. *Painful preheminance! &c.*] This, to his friend:—nor does it at all contradict what he had said to him concerning Happiness, in the beginning of the epistle:

Bring then these blessings to a strict account:
 Make fair deductions; see to what they mount: 270
 How much of other each is sure to cost;
 How each for other oft is wholly lost;

COMMENTARY.

VER. 269. *Bring then these blessings to a strict account, &c.*] Having thus proved how empty and unsatisfactory all these greatest external goods are, from an examination of their nature; he proceeds to strengthen his argument (from v. 268 to 309.) by these three further considerations:

1. That the acquirement of these goods is made with the loss of one another, or of greater; either as inconsistent with them, or as spent in attaining them.

2. That the possessors of each of these goods are generally such, as are so far from raising envy in a good man, that he would refuse to take their persons, though accompanied with their possessions: and this the Poet illustrates by examples.

3. That even the possession of them all together, where they have excluded virtue, only terminates in more enormous misery.

NOTES.

“ 'Tis never to be bought, but always free,

“ And fled from Monarchs, St. John! dwells with thee.

For he is now proving that nothing either external to man, or what is not in man's power, and of his own acquirement, can make him happy here. The most plausible rival of Virtue is Knowledge: yet even this is so far from giving any degree of real happiness, that it deprives us of those common comforts of life, which are a kind of support, under the want of happiness. Such as the more innocent of those delusions which he speaks of in the second Epistle:

“ Those painted clouds that beautify our days, &c.

How inconsistent greater goods with these?
 How sometimes life is risqu'd, and always ease:
 Think, and if still the things thy envy call, 275
 Say, would'st thou be the Man to whom they fall?
 To sigh for ribbands if thou art so silly,
 Mark how they grace Lord Umbra, or Sir Billy.
 Is yellow dirt the passion of thy life!
 Look but on Gripus, or on Gripus' wife. 280
 If Parts allure thee, think how Bacon shin'd,
 The wisest, brightest, meanest of mankind:
 Or ravish'd with the whistling of a Name,
 See Cromwell, damn'd to everlasting fame!

N O T E S .

Now Knowledge destroyeth all those comforts, by setting man above life's weaknesses: So that in him, who thinketh to attain happiness by knowledge alone, independent of virtue, the fable is reversed, and in a preposterous attempt to gain the substance, he loseth even the shadow. This I take to be the sense of this fine stroke of satire on the wrong pursuits after happiness.

VER. 281, 283. *If Parts allure thee,—*

Or ravish'd with the whistling of a Name,]

These two instances are chosen with great judgment. The world, perhaps, doth not afford two such other.

BACON discovered and laid down those two principles, by whose assistance, Newton was enabled to unfold the whole law of Nature. He was no less eminent for the creative power of his imagination; the brightness of his conceptions; and the force of his expression: Yet being convicted on his own confession, for bribery and corruption in the administration of Justice, while he presided in the supreme Court of Equity, he endeavoured to repair his ruined fortunes by the most profligate flattery to the

If all, united, thy ambition call, 285

From ancient story learn to scorn them all.

There, in the rich, the honour'd, fam'd, and great,

See the false scale of Happiness complete!

In hearts of Kings, or arms of Queens who lay,

How happy those to ruin, these betray. 290

Mark by what wretched steps their glory grows,

From dirt and sea-weed as proud Venice rose.

In each how guilt and greatness equal ran,

And all that rais'd the Hero, sunk the Man:

Now Europe's laurels on their brows behold, 295

But stain'd with blood, or ill exchange'd for gold;

Then see them broke with toils, or sunk in ease,

Or infamous for plunder'd provinces.

NOTES.

Court: Which, indeed, from his very first entrance into it, he had accustomed himself to practise with a prostitution that disgraceth the very profession of letters.

CROMWELL seemeth to be distinguished in the most eminent manner, with regard to his abilities, from all other great and wicked men, who have overturned the Liberties of their Country. The times in which others have succeeded in this attempt, were such as saw the spirit of Liberty suppressed and stifled, by a general luxury and venality: But Cromwell subdued his country, when this spirit was at its height, by a successful struggle against court-oppression; and while it was conducted and supported by a set of the greatest Geniuses for government the world ever saw embarked together in one common cause.

VER. 283. *Or ravish'd with the whistling of a Name,]*
And even this fantastic glory sometimes suffers a terrible

Oh wealth ill-fated ! which no act of fame
 E'er taught to shine, or sanctify'd from shame ! 300
 What greater blifs attends their close of life ?
 Some greedy minion, or imperious wife,
 The trophy'd arches, story'd halls invade,
 And haunt their slumbers in the pompous shade.
 Alas ! not dazzled with their noon-tide ray, 305
 Compute the morn and ev'ning to the day ;
 The whole amount of that enormous fame,
 A Tale, that blends their glory with their shame !
 Know then this truth (enough for Man to know)
 " Virtue alone is Happiness below." 310

C O M M E N T A R Y.

VER. 309. *Know then this Truth, &c.*] Having thus at length shewn that happiness consists neither in *any* external goods, nor in *all* kinds of internal (that is, such of

N O T E S.

reverse.—*Sacheverel*, in his *Voyage to I-columbkil*, describing the church there, tells us, that " in one corner is a
 " peculiar inclosure, in which were the monuments of the
 " kings of many different nations, as Scotland, Ireland,
 " Norway, and the *Isle of man*. This (said the person
 " who shewed me the place, pointing to a plain stone)
 " was the monument of the Great TEAGUE, king of Ire-
 " land. I had never heard of him, and could not but
 " reflect of how little value is *Greatness*, that has barely
 " left a *name* scandalous to a nation, and a grave which
 " the meanest of mankind would never envy."

VER. 309. *Know then this truth (enough for Man to know)*
Virtue ALONE is happiness below.]

M. du Resnel translates the lines thus,

" Appren donc, qu'il n'est point icy bas de *Bonheur*
 " *Si la Vertu ne regle et l'Esprit et le Cœur.*

The only point where human bliss stands still,
 And tastes the good without the fall to ill;
 Where only Merit constant pay receives,
 Is blest in what it takes, and what it gives;
 The joy unequal'd, if its end it gain, 315
 And if it lose, attended with no pain:

VARIATIONS.

After γ 316. in the MS.

Ev'n while it seems unequal to dispose,
 And checquers all the good Man's joys with woes,
 'Tis but to teach him to support each state,
 With patience this, with moderation that;

COMMENTARY.

them as are not of our own acquirement) nor yet in the visionary pursuits of the Philosophers, he concludes (from γ 308 to 311.) that it is to be found in VIRTUE ALONE.

VER. 311. *The only point where human bliss stands still, &c.* Hitherto the Poet had proved, NEGATIVELY, that happiness consists in virtue, by shewing it consisted not in any other thing. He now (from γ 310 to 327.) proves the same POSITIVELY, by an enumeration of its qualities, all naturally adapted to give and to increase human happiness; as its Constancy, Capacity, Vigour, Efficacy, Activity, Moderation, and Self-sufficiency.

NOTES.

i. e. *Learn then, that there is no happiness here below, unless Virtue regulate the heart and the understanding:* Which destroys all the force of his Author's conclusion. He had proved, that happiness consists neither in external goods, as the Vulgar imagined; nor yet in the visions of the Philosophers: he concludes therefore that it consists in VIRTUE ALONE. His translator says, that *without Virtue these can be no happiness.* And so say the men whom

Without satiety, tho' e'er so blest'd,
 And but more relish'd as the more distress'd :
 The broadest mirth unfeeling Folly wears,
 Less pleasing far than Virtue's very tears : 320
 Good, from each object, from each place acquir'd,
 For ever exercis'd, yet never tir'd ;
 Never elated, while one man's oppress'd ;
 Never dejected, while another's blest'd ;
 And where no wants, no wishes can remain, 325
 Since but to wish more Virtue, is to gain.

See the sole bliss Heav'n could on all bestow !
 Which who but feels can taste, but thinks can know :

V A R I A T I O N S.

And raise his base on that one solid joy,
 Which conscience gives, and nothing can destroy.

These lines are extremely finished. In which there is such a soothing sweetness in the melancholy harmony of the versification, as if the Poet was then in that tender office in which he was most officious, and in which all his Soul came out, the condoling with some good man in affliction.

C O M M E N T A R Y.

VER. 327. *See the sole bliss Heav'n could on all bestow !*] Having thus proved that happiness is indeed placed in *Virtue*; he proves next (from *ψ* 326 to 329.) that it is *rightly* placed there; for that then, and then only, ALL may partake of it, and ALL be capable of relishing it.

N O T E S.

his Author is here confuting. For tho' they supposed *external* goods requisite to happiness, it was when in conjunction with Virtue. Mr. Pope says,

“ VIRTUE ALONE is happiness below :
 And so ought his Translator to have said after him.

Yet poor with fortune, and with learning blind,
 The bad must miss; the good, untaught, will find;
 Slave to no sect, who takes no private road, 331
 But looks thro' Nature, up to Nature's God;
 Pursues that Chain which links th' immense design,
 Joins heav'n and earth, and mortal and divine;
 Sees, that no Being any bliss can know, 335
 But touches some above, and some below;
 Learns, from this union of the rising Whole,
 The first, last purpose of the human soul;
 And knows where Faith, Law, Morals, all began,
 All end, in LOVE OF GOD, and LOVE OF MAN. 340
 For him alone, Hope leads from goal to goal,
 And opens still, and opens on his soul;

COMMENTARY.

VER. 329. *Yet poor with fortune, &c.*] The Poet then observeth, with some indignation (from v 328 to 341.) that as easy and as evident as this truth was, yet Riches and false Philosophy had so blinded the discernment even of improved minds, that the possessors of the first, placed happiness in externals, unsuitable to man's nature; and the followers of the latter, in refined visions, unsuitable to his situation: while the simple-minded man, with NATURE only for his guide, found plainly in what it should be placed.

VER. 341. *For him alone, Hope leads from goal to goal,*] But this is not all; the Author shews further (from v 340 to 353.) that when the simple-minded man, on his first set-

NOTES.

VER. 341. *For him alone, Hope leads from goal to goal, &c.*] PLATO, in his first book of a Republic, hath a remarkable passage to this purpose. "He whose conscience does not

'Till lengthen'd on to FAITH, and unconfin'd,
 It pours the blifs that fills up all the mind.
 He fees, why Nature plants in Man alone 345
 Hope of known blifs, and Faith in blifs unknown :

C O M M E N T A R Y.

ting out in the purfuit of Truth in order to happinefs, hath had the wifdom

“ To look thro' Nature up to Nature's God,
 (inftead of adhering to any feft or party, where there was fo great odds of his chufing wrong) that then the benefit of gaining the knowledge of *God's will written in the mind*, is not confined there ; for ftanding on this fure foundation, he is now no longer in danger of chufing wrong, amidft fuch diverfities of Religions ; but by purfuing this grand fcheme of univerfal benevolence, in practice as well as theory, he arrives at length to the knowledge of the *revealed will of God*, which is the confummation of the fyftem of benevolence :

“ For him alone, Hope leads from goal to goal,
 “ And opens ftill, and opens on his foul ;
 “ 'Till lengthen'd on to Faith, and unconfin'd,
 “ It pours the blifs that fills up all the mind.

N O T E S.

“ reproach him, has chearful *Hope*, for his companion,
 “ and the fupport and comfort of his old age, according
 “ to Pindar. For this great Poet, O Socrates, very elegantly fays, That he who leads a juft and holy life has
 “ always amiable *Hope* for his companion, which fills his
 “ heart with joy, and is the fupport and comfort of his
 “ old age. *Hope*, the moft powerful of the Divinities, in
 “ governing the ever-changing and inconstant temper of
 “ mortal men.” Τῷ δὲ μηδὲν ἑαυτῷ ἀδίκον ξυνειδῶτι ἡδεῖα
 ἐλπίς αἰεὶ πάρεσι, καὶ ἀγαθὴ γηρολόφος, ὥς καὶ Πίνδαρος λέγει.
 Χαριέντως γάρ τοι, ὦ Σώκρατες, τῷτ' ἐκεῖνος εἶπεν, ὅτι ὁς ἀνδραγαθῶς
 καὶ ὁσίως τὸν βίον διαγάγῃ, γλυκεῖά οἱ καρδίαν ἀτάλλασσα γηρο-

(Nature, whose dictates to no other kind
 Are giv'n in vain, but what they seek they find)
 Wise is her present; she connects in this
 His greatest Virtue with his greatest Bliss; 350
 At once his own bright prospect to be blest,
 And strongest motive to assist the rest.

Self-love thus push'd to social, to divine,
 Gives thee to make thy neighbour's blessing thine.

COMMENTARY.

VER. 353. *Self-love thus push'd to social, &c.*] The Poet, in the last place, marks out (from ψ 352 to 373.) the progress of his good man's benevolence, pushed through natural religion to revealed, till it arrives to that height which the sacred writers describe as the very summit of Christian perfection; and shews how the progress of *human* differs from the progress of *divine* benevolence. That the divine descends from *whole* to *parts*; but that the human must rise from *individual* to *universal*. His argument for this extended benevolence is, that, as God has made a Whole, whose parts have a perfect relation to, and an entire dependency on each other, man, by extending his benevolence throughout that Whole, acts in conformity to the will of his Creator; and therefore this enlargement of his affection becomes a duty. But the Poet hath not

NOTES.

τρόφος συναγορεύει ἐλπίς, ἃ μάλιστα διὰ τῶν πολύσερον γνώμην καθεστῆναι. In the same manner Euripides speaks in his *Hercules furens*,

Οὗτος δ' ἀνὴρ ἄριστος ὅστις ἐλπίσιν
 Πέποιθεν αἰεὶ τὸ δ' ἀπορεῖν, ἀνδρὸς κακῆς. ψ 105.

“ He is the good man in whose breast Hope springs eternally: But to be without Hope in the world is the portion of the wicked.”

Is this too little for the boundless heart? 355

Extend it, let thy enemies have part:

Grasp the whole worlds of Reason, Life, and Sense,

In one close system of Benevolence:

Happier as kinder, in whate'er degree,

And height of Bliss but height of Charity. 360

COMMENTARY.

only shewn his piety in this observation, but the utmost art and address likewise in the disposition of it. The *Essay on Man* opens with exposing the murmurings and impious conclusions of foolish men against the present constitution of things: as it proceeds, it occasionally detects all those false principles and opinions, which led them to conclude thus perversely. Having now done all that was necessary in speculation, the Author turns to practice; and ends his *Essay* with the recommendation of an acknowledged virtue, CHARITY; which, if exercised in the *extent* that conformity to the will of God requireth, would effectually prevent all complaints against the present order of things: such complaints being made with a total disregard to every thing but their *own private system*, and seeking remedy in the disorder, and at the expence of all the rest. This observation,

“ Self-love but serves the virtuous mind to wake,
is important: Rochefoucault, Esprit, and their wordy disciple Mandeville, had observed that Self-love was the *origin* of all those virtues which mankind most admire; and therefore foolishly supposed it was the *end* likewise: and so taught that the highest pretences to disinterestedness were only the more artful disguises of Self-love. But our Author, who says somewhere or other,

“ Of human Nature, Wit its worst may write,

“ We all revere it in our own despite, MS.

saw, as well as they, and every body else, that the Passions

God loves from Whole to Parts: But human soul
Must rise from Individual to the Whole.
Self-love but serves the virtuous mind to wake,
As the small pebble stirs the peaceful lake;
The centre mov'd, a circle strait succeeds, 365
Another still, and still another spreads;
Friend, parent, neighbour, first it will embrace;
His country next; and next all human race;
Wide and more wide, th' o'erflowings of the mind
Take ev'ry creature in, of ev'ry kind; 370
Earth smiles around, with boundless bounty blest,
And Heav'n beholds its image in his breast.

Come then, my Friend! my Genius! come along;
Oh master of the poet, and the song!

VARIATIONS.

VER. 373. *Come then, my Friend! &c.*] In the MS. thus,
And now transported o'er so vast a Plain,
While the wing'd courser flies with all her rein,

COMMENTARY.

began in Self-love; yet he understood human nature better than to imagine that they ended there. He knew that Reason and Religion could convert Selfishness into its very opposite; and therefore teacheth that

“ Self-love but serves the virtuous mind to wake:
And thus hath vindicated the dignity of human Nature,
and the philosophic truth of the Christian doctrine.

NOTES.

VER. 373. *Come then, my Friend! &c.*] This noble apostrophe, by which the Poet concludes the Essay in an address to his friend, will furnish a critic with examples of

And while the Muse now stoops, or now ascends, 375
 To man's low passions, or their glorious ends,
 Teach me, like thee, in various nature wise,
 To fall with dignity, with temper rise;
 Form'd by thy converse, happily to steer
 From grave to gay, from lively to severe: 380

VARIATIONS.

While heav'n-ward now her mounting wing she feels,
 Now scatter'd fools fly trembling from her heels,
 Wilt thou, my ST. JOHN! keep her course in fight,
 Confine her fury and assist her flight?

NOTES.

every one of those *five* Species of elocution, from which, as from its sources, Longinus deduceth the *SUBLIME* ^a.

1. The first and chief is *a grandeur and sublimity of conception*:

“ Come then, my Friend! my Genius! come along,
 “ O Master of the Poet, and the Song!
 “ And while the Muse now stoops, and now ascends,
 “ To Man's low passions, or their glorious ends——

2. The *second*, that *pathetic enthusiasm*, which, at the same time, melts and inflames:

“ Teach me, like thee, in various nature wise,
 “ To fall with dignity, with temper rise,
 “ Form'd by thy converse, happily to steer
 “ From grave to gay, from lively to severe;
 “ Correct with spirit, eloquent with ease,
 “ Intent to reason, or polite to please.

^a— πέντε πηγαί τινές εἰσιν τ' ὑψηγορίας. 1. Πρῶτον μὲν καὶ κρα-
 τιστον τὸ περὶ τὰς νοήσεις ἀδρεπκήβολον. 2. Δεύτερον δὲ τὸ σφοδρὸν
 καὶ ἐνθουσιαστικὸν πάθος. 3. Ποιὰ τῶν σχημάτων πλάσις. 4. Ἡ
 γυναιῖα φράσις. 5. Πέμπτη δὲ μεγέθους αἰτία, καὶ συγκλείουσα τὰ
 πρὸ ἐαυτῆς ἅπαντα, ἢ ἐν ἀξιώματι καὶ διάρσει σύνδεσις.

Correct with spirit, eloquent with ease,
 Intent to reason, or polite to please.
 Oh! while along the stream of Time thy name
 Expanded flies, and gathers all its fame;
 Say, shall my little bark attendant sail, 385
 Pursue the triumph, and partake the gale?
 When statesmen, heroes, kings, in dust repose,
 Whose sons shall blush their fathers were thy foes,
 Shall then this verse to future age pretend
 Thou wert my guide, philosopher, and friend? 390
 That urg'd by thee, I turn'd the tuneful art
 From sounds to things, from fancy to the heart;

NOTES.

3. *A certain elegant formation and ordonnance of figures:*

“ O! while along the stream of Time thy name
 “ Expanded flies, and gathers all its fame,
 “ Say, shall my little bark attendant sail,
 “ Pursue the triumph, and partake the gale!

4. *A splendid diction:*

“ When statesmen, heroes, kings, in dust repose,
 “ Whose sons shall blush their fathers were thy foes,
 “ Shall then this verse to future age pretend
 “ Thou wert my guide, philosopher, and friend?
 “ That, urg'd by thee, I turn'd the tuneful art,
 “ From sounds to things, from fancy to the heart;
 “ For Wit's false mirror held up Nature's light;—

5. And fifthly, which includes in itself all the rest, a
weight and dignity in the composition:

“ Shew'd erring Pride whatever is, is RIGHT;
 “ That REASON, PASSION, answer one great AIM;
 “ That true SELF-LOVE and SOCIAL are the SAME;
 “ That VIRTUE only makes our BLISS below;
 “ And all our Knowledge is OURSELVES TO KNOW?

For Wit's false mirror held up Nature's light;
 Shew'd erring Pride, WHATEVER IS, IS RIGHT;
 That REASON, PASSION, answer one great aim; 395
 That true SELF-LOVE and SOCIAL are the same;

COMMENTARY.

VER. 394. *Shew'd erring Pride, Whatever Is, is Right* ;] The Poet's address to his friend, which concludeth this epistle so nobly, and endeth with a recapitulation of the general argument, affords me the following observation, with which I shall conclude these remarks.—There is one great beauty that shines through the whole *Essay*: The Poet, whether he speaks of man as an individual, a member of society, or the subject of happiness, never misseeth an opportunity, while he is explaining his state under any of these capacities, to illustrate it in the most artful manner by the inforcement of his grand Principle, *That every thing tendeth to the good of the Whole*; from whence his system gaineth the reciprocal advantage of having that grand Theorem realized by facts: and his facts, justified on a principle of Right or Nature.

THUS I have endeavoured to analyse, and explain the exact reasoning of these four epistles. Enough, I presume, to convince every one, that it hath a precision, force, and closeness of connection, rarely to be met with, even in the most formal treatises of philosophy. Yet in doing this, it is but too evident I have destroyed that grace and energy which animates the original. And now let the reader believe, if he be so disposed, what M. de Crousaz, in his Critique upon this work, insinuates to be his own opinion, as well as that of his friends: “Some persons, says he, “have conjectured that Mr. Pope did not compose this “*Essay* at once, and in a regular order; but that after “he had wrote several fragments of poetry, all finished “in their kind (one, for example, on the parallel between Reason and Instinct, another upon Man's groundless Pride, another on the Prerogatives of human Nature, another on Religion and Superstition, another on

That VIRTUE only makes our Bliss below;
And all our Knowledge is, OURSELVES TO KNOW.

VARIATIONS.

VER. 397. *That Virtue only, &c.*] in the MS. thus,
That just to find a God is all we can,
And all the Study of Mankind is Man.

COMMENTARY.

“ the Original of Society, and several fragments besides
“ on Self-love and the Passions) he tacked these toge-
“ ther as he could, and divided them into four epistles;
“ as, it is said, was the fortune of Homer’s Rhapsodies.”
I suppose this will be believed as soon of one as of the
other. But M. Du Resnel his Translator, is not behind
hand with the Critic, in his judgment on their Author’s
work. “ The only reason (says he) for which this poem
“ can be properly termed an *Essay*, is, that the Author
“ has not formed his plan with all the regularity of me-
“ thod which it might have admitted.”—And again—
“ I was, by the unanimous opinion of all those whom
“ I have consulted on this occasion, and amongst these,
“ of several *Englishmen* completely skilled in both lan-
“ guages, obliged to follow a different method. The French
“ are not satisfied with sentiments, however beautiful, unless
“ they be methodically disposed: Method being the characteristic
“ that distinguishes our performances from those of our neigh-
“ bours,” &c. It is enough just to have quoted these won-
derful Men of method, and to leave them to the laughter
of the World.

THE
UNIVERSAL
PRAYER.
DEO OPT. MAX.

THE
UNIVERSAL
PRAYER
BOOK OF T. MAX.

THE

Universal Prayer.

DEO OPT. MAX.

FATHER of All! in ev'ry Age,
 In ev'ry Clime ador'd,
 By Saint, by Savage, and by Sage,
 Jehovah, Jove, or Lord!

Thou Great First Cause, least understood:
 Who all my Sense confin'd
 To know but this, that Thou art Good,
 And that myself am blind;

COMMENTARY.

Universal Prayer.] It may be proper to observe, that some passages, in the preceding *Essay*, having been unjustly suspected of a tendency towards fate and *Naturalism*, the Author composed this prayer as the sum of all, to shew that his system was founded in *free-will*, and terminated in piety: that the first cause was as well the Lord and Governor of the Universe as the Creator of it; and that, by submission to his will (the great principle inforced throughout the *Essay*) was not meant suffering ourselves to be carried along by a blind determination, but resting in a re-

172 UNIVERSAL PRAYER.

Yet gave me, in this dark Estate,
 To see the Good from Ill;
 And binding Nature fast in Fate,
 Left free the Human Will.

What Conscience dictates to be done,
 Or warns me not to do,
 This, teach me more than Hell to shun,
 That, more than Heav'n pursue.

What Blessings thy free Bounty gives,
 Let me not cast away;
 For God is paid when Man receives,
 T' enjoy is to obey.

Yet not to Earth's contracted Span
 Thy goodness let me bound,
 Or think Thee Lord alone of Man,
 When thousand Worlds are round;

Let not this weak, unknowing hand
 Presume thy bolts to throw,
 And deal damnation round the land,
 On each I judge thy Foe.

COMMENTARY.

ligious acquiescence, and confidence full of *Hope* and Immortality. To give all this the greater weight, the Poet chose for his model the LORD'S PRAYER, which, of all others, best deserves the title prefixed to his paraphrase.

If I am right, thy grace impart,
 Still in the right to stay;
 If I am wrong, oh teach my heart
 To find that better way.

Save me alike from foolish Pride,
 Or impious Discontent,
 At aught thy wisdom has deny'd,
 Or aught thy Goodness lent.

Teach me to feel another's Woe,
 To hide the Fault I see;
 That Mercy I to others shew,
 That Mercy shew to me,

Mean tho' I am, not wholly so,
 Since quick'ned by thy Breath;
 Oh lead me wheresoe'er I go,
 Thro' this day's Life or Death.

NOTES.

*If I am right, thy grace impart,—
 If I am wrong, O teach my heart]*

As the *imparting of grace*, on the christian system, is a stronger exertion of the divine Power, than the natural illumination of the heart, one would expect that *right* and *wrong* should change places; more aid being required to *restore* men to right, than to *keep* them in it. But as it was the Poet's purpose to insinuate that Revelation was the *right*, nothing could better express his purpose than making the right secured by the guards of *grace*.

174 UNIVERSAL PRAYER.

This day, be Bread and Peace my Lot:
All else beneath the Sun,
Thou know'st if best bestow'd or not,
And let Thy Will be done.

To thee, whose Temple is all Space,
Whose Altar, Earth, Sea, Skies!
One Chorus let all Being raise!
All Nature's Incense rise!



The dying Christian to his SOUL.

O D E *.

I.

VITAL spark of heav'nly flame;
Quit, oh quit this mortal frame:
Trembling, hoping, ling'ring, flying,
Oh the pain, the bliss of dying!
Cease, fond Nature, cease thy strife,
And let me languish into life.

II.

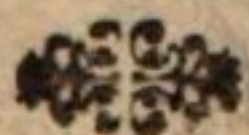
Hark! they whisper; Angels say,
Sister Spirit, come away.
What is this absorbs me quite?
Steals my senses, shuts my sight,
Drowns my spirits, draws my breath?
Tell me my Soul, can this be Death?

III.

The world recedes; it disappears!
Heav'n opens on my eyes! my ears
With sounds seraphic ring:
Lend, lend your wings! I mount! I fly!
O Grave! where is thy victory?
O Death! where is thy Sting?

NOTES.

* This ode was written in imitation of the famous sonnet of Hadrian to his departing soul; but as much superior to his original, in sense and sublimity, as the *Christian* Religion is to the *Pagan*.



The dying Christian to his God.

O D E.

VITAL Spark of heav'nly flame;

Quell'd thou art the mortal flame;

Tearing the burning ling'ring flame;

On the pain, the bliss of death;

Cease, kind Nature, cease thy strife;

And let me languish into life.

II.

What! they whisper; Angels say,

Shut Spirit, come away.

What is this about the point?

Seems my senses thus my light,

Drawn my spirit thus my breath?

Tell me my soul, what's to be done?

The world recedes; 'tis disappear!

Heav'n opens on my eyes; my ears

With sounds celestial ring;

And, land your wings! I mourn! I bow

O God! where is thy willow?

O Death! where is thy sting?

No more.

This ode was written in imitation of the famous sonnet of Shakspeare to his departing love; but as it was not to be original, in style and language, as the original, Religion is to the page.

MORAL ESSAYS

IN

FOUR EPISTLES

TO

Several Persons.

Est brevitæ opus, ut currat sententia, neu se
Impediat verbis lassæ onerantibus aures:
Et sermone opus est modo tristi, sæpe jocofo,
Defendente vicem modo Rhetoris atque Poetæ,
Interdum urbani, parentis viribus, atque
Extenuantis eas consultò. HOR.

MORAL ESSAYS

IN

FOUR EPISTLES

TO

Several Persons.

Est pietate opus, ut curat sententia, non se
impediat verba lassa onerantibus aures;
Et sermone opus est modo illi, laxe ioculo,
Delinquentem vitæ modo. Quævis aptas locas,
Interdum nitens, parces vitibus, æque
Hor.

MORAL ESSAYS.

EPISTLE I.

TO

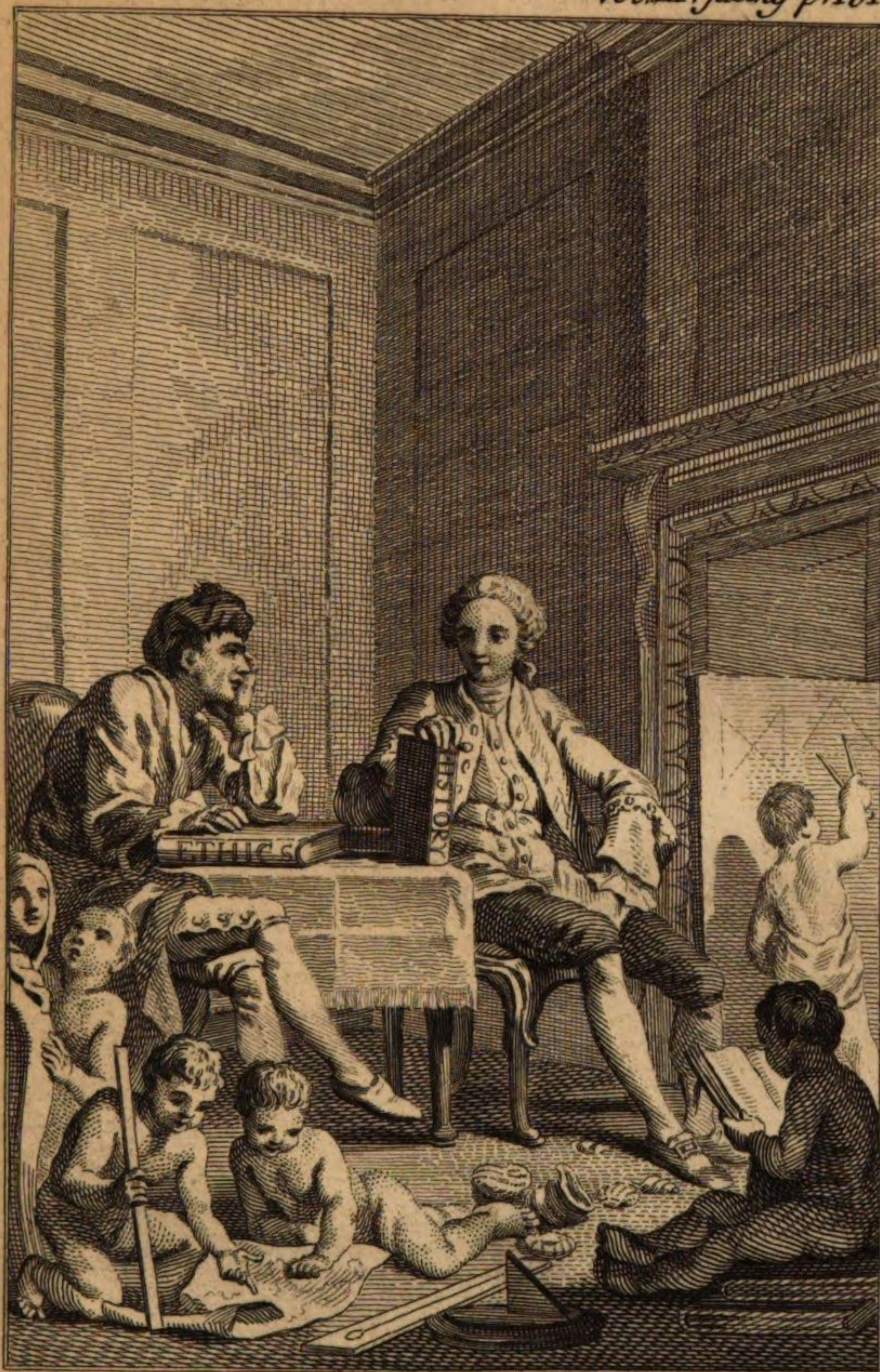
Sir Richard Temple, Lord Cobham.

ARGUMENT.

Of the Knowledge and Characters of MEN.

THAT it is not sufficient for this knowledge to consider Man in the Abstract: Books will not serve the purpose, nor yet our own Experience singly, § 1. General maxims, unless they be formed upon both, will be but notional, § 10. Some Peculiarity in every man, characteristic to himself, yet varying from himself, § 15. Difficulties arising from our own Passions, Fancies, Faculties, &c. § 31. The shortness of Life, to observe in, and the uncertainty of the Principles of action in men, to observe by, § 37, &c. Our own Principle of action often hid from ourselves, § 41. Some few Characters plain, but in general confounded, dissembled, or inconsistent, § 51. The same man utterly different in different places and seasons, § 71. Unimaginable weaknesses in the greatest, § 70, &c.

Nothing constant and certain but God and Nature,
¶ 95. *No judging of the Motives from the actions;*
the same actions proceeding from contrary Motives,
and the same Motives influencing contrary actions,
¶ 100. II. *Yet to form Characters, we can only*
take the strongest actions of a man's life, and try to
make them agree: The utter uncertainty of this, from
Nature itself, and from Policy, ¶ 120. *Characters*
given according to the rank of men of the world,
¶ 135. *And some reason for it,* ¶ 140. *Education*
alters the Nature, or at least Character, of many,
¶ 149. *Actions, Passions, Opinions, Manners, Hu-*
mours, or Principles, all subject to change. No judging
by Nature, from ¶ 158 *to* 178. III. *It only remains*
to find (if we can) his RULING PASSION: That
will certainly influence all the rest, and can reconcile
the seeming or real inconsistency of all his actions,
¶ 175. *Instanced in the extraordinary character of*
Clodio, ¶ 179. *A caution against mistaking second*
qualities for first, which will destroy all possibility of
the knowledge of mankind, ¶ 210. *Examples of the*
strength of the Ruling Passion, and its continuation
to the last breath, ¶ 222, &c.



The proper Study of Mankind is MAN.

Essay on Man.

MORAL ESSAYS.

EPISTLE I.

Of the Knowledge and Characters of MEN.

YES, you despise the man to Books confin'd,
 Who from his study rails at human kind;
 Tho' what he learns he speaks, and may advance
 Some gen'ral maxims, or be right by chance.

COMMENTARY.

Epistle of the Knowledge and Characters of Men.] Whoever compares this with the former editions of the Epistle, will observe, that the order and disposition of the several parts are entirely changed and reversed; tho' with hardly the alteration of a single word. When the Editor, at the Author's desire, first examined this epistle, he was surprized to find it contain a number of exquisite observations, without order, connection, or dependence: but much more so, when, on an attentive review, he saw, that, if the epistle was put into a different form, on an idea he then

NOTES.

Moral Essays.] The ESSAY ON MAN was intended to have been comprised in four books:

The *First* of which, the Author has given us under that title, in four epistles.

The *Second* was to have consisted of the same number:

1. Of the extent and limits of human reason. 2. Of those

The coxcomb bird, so talkative and grave, 5
 That from his cage cries Cuckold, Whore, and Knave,
 Tho' many a passenger he rightly call,
 You hold him no Philosopher at all.

C O M M E N T A R Y.

conceived, it would have all the clearness of method, and force of connected reasoning. The Author appeared as much struck with the thing as the Editor, and agreed to put the poem into the present order; which has given it all the justness of a true composition. The introduction to the epistle on Riches was in the same condition, and underwent the same reform.

EPISTLE I.] This epistle is divided into three principal parts or members: The first (from *ŷ* 1 to 99.) treats of the difficulties in coming at the *knowledge* and true *characters of men*.—The second (from *ŷ* 98 to 173.) of the

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arts and sciences, and of the parts of them, which are useful, and therefore attainable; together with those which are unuseful, and therefore unattainable. 3. Of the nature, ends, use, and application of the different capacities of Men. 4. Of the use of learning; of the science of the world; and of wit; concluding with a satyr against the misapplication of them; illustrated by pictures, characters, and examples.

The *third* book regarded civil regimen, or the science of politics; in which, the several forms of a Republic were to be examined and explained; together with the several modes of religious Worship, so far forth as they affect Society; between which the Author always supposed there was the most interesting relation, and close connection. So that this part would have treated of civil and religious society in their full extent.

And yet the fate of all extremes is such,
Men may be read, as well as Books, too much, 10

COMMENTARY.

wrong means which both *Philosophers* and *men of the World* have employed in surmounting those difficulties. And the third (from ψ 174 to the end) treats of the *right means*; with directions for the application of them.

VER. 1. *Yes, you despise the man, &c.*] The Epistle is introduced (from ψ 1 to 15.) by observing, that the *Knowledge of men* is neither to be gained by books nor experience alone, but by the joint use of both; for that the *maxims* of the *Philosopher* and the *conclusions* of the *man of the World*

NOTES.

The *fourth* and last book concerned private ethics or practical morality; considered in all the circumstances, orders, professions, and stations of human life.

The scheme of all this had been maturely digested; and communicated to L. Bolingbroke, Dr. Swift, and one or two more; and was intended for the only work of his riper years: but was, partly through ill health, partly through discouragements from the depravity of the times, and partly on prudential and other considerations, interrupted, postponed, and, lastly, in a manner laid aside.

But as this was the Author's favourite work, which more exactly reflected the image of his own strong capacious mind, and as we can have but a very imperfect idea of it from the *disjecta membra Poetæ*, which now remain; it may not be amiss to be a little more particular concerning each of these projected books.

The FIRST, as it treats of Man in the abstract, and considers him in general, under every of his relations, becomes the foundation, and furnishes out the subjects, of the *three* following; so that

The SECOND Book was to take up again the *first* and *second* epistles of the *first* book; and to treat of man in his

To observations which ourselves we make,
 We grow more partial for th' Observer's sake;
 To written Wisdom, as another's, less:
 Maxims are drawn from Notions, those from Guess.

C O M M E N T A R Y.

can, separately, but supply a vague and superficial knowledge: often not so much; as those *maxims* are founded in the abstract *notions* of the writer; and these *conclusions* are drawn from the uncertain *conjectures* of the observer: But when the writer joins his *speculation* to the experience of the observer, his *notions* are rectified into *principles*: and when the observer regulates his *experience* on the *notions* of the writer, his *conjectures* advance into *science*. Such is the reasoning of this introduction; which, besides its propriety

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intellectual capacity at large, as has been explained above. Of this, only a small part of the conclusion (which, as we said, was to have contained a satire against the misapplication of wit and learning) may be found in the *fourth* book of the *Dunciad*; and up and down, occasionally, in the other *three*.

The *THIRD* Book, in like manner, was to reassume the subject of the *third* epistle of the *first*, which treats of Man in his social, political, and religious capacity. But this part the Poet afterwards conceived might be best executed in an *EPIC* POEM; as the Action would make it more animated, and the Fable less invidious; in which all the great principles of true and false Governments and Religions should be chiefly delivered in feigned examples.

The *FOURTH* and last book was to pursue the subject of the *fourth* epistle of the *first*, and to treat of *ethics*, or practical morality; and would have consisted of many members; of which, the four following epistles are detached portions: the *two first*, on the *Characters of Men and Women*, being the *introductory* part of this concluding book.

There's some Peculiar in each leaf and grain, 15
Some unmark'd fibre, or some varying vein:

COMMENTARY.

to the general subject of the epistle, has a peculiar relation to each of its parts or members: For the *causes of the difficulty* in coming at the knowledge and characters of men, explained in the first, will shew the importance of what is here delivered, of the *joint* assistance of speculation and practice to surmount it; and the *wrong means*, which both *philosophers* and *men of the world* have employed in overcoming those difficulties discoursed of in the second, have their source here deduced; which is seen to be a *separate* adherence of each to his own method of studying men, and a mutual contempt of the others. Lastly, the *right means* delivered in the third, will be of little use in the application, without the direction here delivered: for tho' the observation of men and manners discovered a *ruling passion*, yet, without a *philosophic* knowledge of human nature, we may easily mistake a *secondary* and *subsidiary* passion for the *principal*, and so be never the nearer in the Knowledge of Men. But the elegant and easy *form* of the *introduction* equals the propriety of its *matter*; for the epistle being addressed to a noble person, distinguished for his knowledge of the world, it opens, as it were, in the midst of a familiar conversation, which lets us at once into his character; where the Poet, by politely affecting only to ridicule the useless knowledge of men confined to books, and only to extol that acquired by the world, artfully insinuates how alike defective the latter may be, when conducted on the same narrow principle: Which is too often the case; as *men of the world* are more than ordinarily prejudiced in favour of their own observations for the sake of the observer; and, for the same reason, less indulgent to the discoveries of others.

I.

VER. 15. *There's some Peculiar, &c.*] The Poet enters on

NOTES.

VER. 9. *And yet—Men may be read, as well as Books, too much, &c.*] The Poet has here covertly describ'd a famous

Shall only Man be taken in the gross?

Grant but as many sorts of Mind as Moss.

That each from other differs, first confess;

Next, that he varies from himself no less: 20

Add Nature's, Custom's, Reason's, Passion's strife,

And all Opinion's colours cast on life.

COM M E N T A R Y.

the First division of his subject, *the difficulties of coming at the Knowledge and true characters of men.* The first cause of this difficulty, which he prosecutes (from 14 to 19.) is the great *diversity of characters*; of which, to abate our wonder, and not discourage our inquiry, he only desires we would grant him

—“ but as many sorts of Mind as Moss.

Hereby artfully insinuating, that if Nature has varied the most worthless vegetable into above three hundred species, we need not wonder at a greater diversity in the human mind: And if the variety in that vegetable has been thought of importance enough to employ the leisure of a serious enquirer, much more will the same quality in this master-piece of Nature deserve our study and attention.

VER. 19. *That each from other differs, &c.*] A second cause of this difficulty (from ψ 18 to 21.) is *man's inconstancy*; whereby not only one man differs from another, but each man from himself.

VER. 21. *Add Nature's, &c.*] A third cause (from ψ 20 to 23.) is that *obscurity* thrown over the characters of men,

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system of a *man of the world*, the celebrated *maxims of M. de la Rochefoucault*, which are one continued *satire* on human Nature; and hold much of the ill language of the parrot: Our Author's system of human nature will explain the *reason* of the censure.

VER. 22. *And all Opinion's colours cast on life.*] The Poet refers here only to the *effects*: In the *Essay on Man* he gives

Our depths who fathoms, or our shallows finds,
Quick whirls, and shifting eddies, of our minds?
On human Actions reason tho' you can, 25
It may be Reason, but it is not Man:
His principle of action once explore,
That instant 'tis his Principle no more.

COMMENTARY.

through the strife and contest between *nature* and *custom*, between *reason* and *appetite*, between *truth* and *opinion*. And as most men, either thro' *education*, *temperature*, or *profession*, have their characters warp'd by *custom*, *appetite*, and *opinion*, the obscurity arising from thence is almost universal.

VER. 23. *Our depths who fathoms, &c.*] A fourth cause (from *✓* 20 to 25.) is deep *dissimulation*, and restless *caprice*; whereby the shallows of the mind are as difficult to be found, as the depths of it to be fathom'd.

VER. 25. *On human Actions, &c.*] A fifth cause (from *✓* 24 to 31.) is the sudden change of his *principle of action*:

NOTES.

both the *efficient* and the *final cause*: The First in the third Ep. *✓* 231.

“ E'er Wit oblique had broke that steady light.

For, *oblique Wit* is *Opinion*. The other, in the second Ep. *✓* 283.

“ Meanwhile Opinion gilds with varying rays

“ These painted clouds that beautify our days, &c.

VER. 26. *It may be Reason, but it is not Man:*] *i. e.* The philosopher may invent a *rational hypothesis* which shall account for the appearances he would investigate; and yet that *hypothesis* be, all the while, very wide of *truth* and the *nature of things*.

Like following life thro' creatures you dissect,
You lose it in the moment you detect. 30

Yet more; the difference is as great between
The optics seeing, as the objects seen.

All Manners take a tincture from our own;
Or come discolour'd thro' our Passions shown.

Or Fancy's beam enlarges, multiplies, 35
Contracts, inverts, and gives ten thousand dyes.

COMMENTARY.

either on the point of its being laid open and detected, or when it is reasoned upon, and attempted to be explored.

VER. 31. *Yet more the difference, &c.*] Hitherto the Poet hath spoken of the causes of difficulty arising from the *obscurity of the object*; he now comes to those which proceed from *defects in the observer*. The first of which, and a sixth cause of difficulty, he shews (from 30 to 37.) is the perverse *manners, affections, and imaginations* of the observer; whereby the characters of others are rarely seen either in their true *light, complexion, or proportion*.

NOTES.

VER. 29. *Like following life through creatures you dissect,
You lose it in the moment you detect.*]

This Simile is extremely beautiful. In order to shew the difficulty of discovering the operations of the heart in a *moral sense*, the Poet illustrates it by another attempt still more difficult, the discovery of its operations in a *natural*: For the seat of animal life being in the *heart*, our endeavours of tracing it thither must necessarily drive it from thence.

VER. 33. *All Manners take a tincture from our own,
Or come discolour'd thro' our Passions shown.*]
These two lines are remarkable for the exactness and propriety of expression. The word *tincture*, which implies

Nor will Life's stream for observation stay,
 It hurries all too fast to mark their way :
 In vain sedate reflections we would make,
 When half our knowledge we must snatch, not take.
 Oft, in the Passions' wild rotation tost, 41
 Our spring of action to ourselves is lost :

COMMENTARY.

VER. 37. *Nor will Life's stream for observation, &c.*] The second of these, and seventh cause of difficulty (from *ψ* 36 to 41.) is the *shortness of human life*; which will not suffer the observer to select and weigh out his knowledge, but just to snatch it, as it rolls swiftly by him, down the rapid current of Time.

VER. 41. *Oft, in the Passions', &c.*] We come now to the eighth and last cause, which very properly concludes the account; as, in a sort, it sums up all the difficulties in one (from *ψ* 40 to 51.) namely, that very often the *man himself is ignorant of his own motive of action*; the cause of which ignorance our author has admirably explain'd: When the mind (says he) is now quite tired out by the long conflict of opposite motives, it withdraws its attention; and suffers the *will* to be seized upon by the first that afterwards obtrudes itself; without taking notice what that motive is. This is finely illustrated by what he supposes to be the general cause of dreams; where the fancy, just let loose, possesses itself of the *last image* which it meets with, on the confines between sleep and waking; and on that, erects all its visionary operation; yet this seizure is, with great difficulty, recollected; and never, but when some

NOTES.

a weak colour given by degrees, well describes the influence of the *Manners*; and the word *discolour*, which implies a quicker change and by a deeper dye, denotes as well the operation of the *Passions*.

Tir'd, not determin'd, to the last we yield,
 And what comes then is master of the field.
 As the last image of that troubled heap, 45
 When sense subsides, and Fancy sports in sleep,
 (Tho' past the recollection of the thought)
 Becomes the stuff of which our dream is wrought:
 Something as dim to our internal view,
 Is thus, perhaps, the cause of most we do. 50
 True, some are open, and to all men known;
 Others so very close, they're hid from none;
 (So darkness strikes the sense no less than Light)
 Thus gracious CHANDOS is belov'd at sight;
 And ev'ry child hates Shylock, tho' his soul 55
 Still sits at squat, and peeps not from its hole.

C O M M E N T A R Y.

accident happens to interrupt our first slumbers: Then
 (which proves the truth of the hypothesis) we are some-
 times able to trace the workings of the Fancy backwards,
 from image to image, in a chain, till we come to that
 from whence they all arose.

VER. 51. *True, some are open, &c.*] But now in answer
 to all this, an *objector* (from *y* 50 to 61.) may say, "That
 these difficulties seem to be aggravated: For many cha-

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VER. 56.—*peeps not from its hole.*] Which shews that
 this grave person was content with his present situation,
 as finding but small satisfaction in what a famous Poet
 reckons one of the great advantages of old age,

" The soul's dark cottage, batter'd and decay'd,
 " Lets in new light from chinks that time has made.

SCRIBL.

At half mankind when gen'rous Manly raves,
 All know 'tis Virtue, for he thinks them knaves:
 When universal homage Umbra pays,
 All see 'tis Vice, and itch of vulgar praise.
 When Flatt'ry glares, all hate it in a Queen,
 While one there is who charms us with his Spleen.

But these plain Characters we rarely find;
 Tho' strong the bent, yet quick the turns of mind:
 Or puzzling Contraries confound the whole; 65
 Or Affectations quite reverse the soul.

COMMENTARY.

acters are so plainly marked, that no man can mistake them: and not so only in the more *open* and *frank*, but in the *closest* and most *recluse* likewise." Of each of these the objector gives an instance; by which it appears, that the forbidding closeness and concealed hypocrisy in the one, are as conspicuous to all mankind, as the gracious openness and frank plain-dealing of the other.—The Reader sees, this objection is more particularly level'd at the doctrine of § 23.

" Our *depths* who fathoms, and our *shallows* finds, for here it endeavours to prove, that both are equally explorable.

VER. 63. *But these plain Characters, &c.*] To this objection, therefore, our author replies (from § 60 to 70.) that indeed the fact may be true, in the instances given; but that such *plain characters* are extremely rare: And for the truth of this, he not only appeals to experience, but explains the causes of those perplexed and complicated humours which diffuse themselves over the whole species. 1. The first of which is, the *vivacity of the imagination*; that when the bias of the passions is sufficiently determined to mark out the Character, the vigour of the fancy ge-

The Dull, flat Falshood serves, for policy:
 And in the Cunning, Truth itself's a lye:
 Unthought-of Frailties cheat us in the Wise;
 The Fool lies hid in inconsistencies. 70

See the same man, in vigour, in the gout;
 Alone, in company; in place, or out;

COMMENTARY.

nerally rising in proportion to the strength of the appetites, the one no sooner draws the bias, than the other turns it to a contrary direction.

“ Tho' strong the bent, yet quick the turns of mind.

2. A second cause is the *contrariety of Appetites*, which drawing several ways, as Avarice and Luxury; Ambition and Indolence, &c. (expressed in the line,

“ Or puzzling Contraries confound the whole,) must needs make the same character inconsistent to itself, and of course, inexplicable by the observer.

3. A third cause is *Affectation*, which aspires to qualities, that neither nature nor education has given us; and which, consequently, neither use nor art will ever render graceful or becoming. On this account it is, he well observes,

“ Or Affectations quite reverse the soul;
natural passions may indeed turn it from that bias which the ruling one has given it; but the *affected passions* distort all its faculties, and cramp all its operations; so that it acts with the same constraint that a tumbler walks upon his hands.

4. A fourth cause lies in the *Inequalities in the human mind*, which expose the wise to unexpected frailties, and conduct the weak to as unlook'd for wisdom.

VER. 71. *See the same man, &c.*] Of all these Four causes he here gives EXAMPLES: 1. Of the *vivacity of the Imagination* (from v 71 to 77)—2. Of the *contrariety of Appetites*

Early at Bus'ness, and at Hazard late;
 Mad at a Fox-chace, wise at a Debate;
 Drunk at a Borough, civil at a Ball; 75
 Friendly at Hackney, faithless at Whitehall.

Catius is ever moral, ever grave,
 Thinks who endures a knave, is next a knave,
 Save just at dinner — then prefers, no doubt,
 A Rogue with Ven'son to a Saint without. 80

Who would not praise Patritio's high desert,
 His hand unstain'd, his uncorrupted heart,
 His comprehensive head! all Int'rests weigh'd,
 All Europe sav'd, yet Britain not betray'd.
 He thanks you not, his pride is in Picquette, 85
 New-market-fame, and judgment at a Bett.
 What made (say Montagne, or more sage Charron!)
 Otho a warrior, Cromwell a buffoon?

VARIATIONS.

After y 86. in the former Editions,

Triumphant leaders, at an army's head,
 Hemm'd round with glories, pilfer cloth or bread;
 As meanly plunder as they bravely fought,
 Now save a People, and now save a groat.

COMMENTARY.

(from y 76 to 81.) — 3. Of *Affectations* (from y 80 to 87.) —
 and 4. Of the *Inequalities of the human mind* (from y 86 to
 95.)

NOTES.

VER. 81. *Patritio*] Lord G—n.

VER. 87. — *say Montagne, or more sage Charron!*] Charron

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P

A perjur'd Prince a leaden Saint revere,

A godless Regent tremble at a Star?

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NOTES.

was an admirer of Montagne; had contracted a strict friendship with him; and has transferred an infinite number of his thoughts into his famous book *De la Sagesse*; but his moderating every-where the extravagant Pyrrhonism of his friend, is the reason why the Poet calls him *more sage Charron*.

VER. 89. *A perjur'd Prince*] Louis XI. of France, wore in his Hat a leaden image of the Virgin Mary, which when he swore by, he feared to break his oath. P,

VER. 90. *A godless Regent tremble at a Star?*] Philip Duke of Orleans, Regent of the minority of Louis XV. superstitious in judicial astrology, tho' an unbeliever in all religion. The same has been observed of many other *Politicians*. The Italians, in general, are not more noted for their refined politics than for their attachment to the dotages of *Astrology*, under the influence of *Atheism*. It may be worth while to enquire into the cause of so singular a phenomenon, as it may probably do honour to Religion. These men observing (and none have equal opportunities of so doing) how perpetually public events fall out besides their expectation, and contrary to the best-laid schemes of worldly policy, cannot but confess that human affairs are ordered by some Power extrinsic. To acknowledge a God and his Providence would be next to introducing a morality destructive of that public system which they think necessary for the government of the world. They have recourse therefore to that absurd scheme of power which rules by no other law than *Fate* or *Destiny*. The consideration of this perhaps was the reason that the Poet, to keep up decorum, and to preserve the distinction between a *Patriot* and a *Politician*, makes his Friend rely upon *Providence* for the public safety, in the concluding words of the epistle,

“ —Such in those moments as in all the past;

“ O save my Country, Heav'n! shall be your last.

The throne a Bigot keep, a Genius quit,
Faithless thro' Piety, and dup'd thro' Wit?
Europe a Woman, Child, or Dotard rule,
And just her wisest monarch made a fool?

Know, GOD and NATURE only are the same: 95
In Man, the judgment shoots at flying game;

COMMENTARY.

VER. 95. *Know, God and Nature, &c.*] Having thus proved what he had proposed; the *premises* naturally lead him into a moral reflexion, with which he concludes his *first part*, namely, that constancy is to be expected in no human Character whatsoever; but is to be found only in God and his Laws: That as to Man, he is not only perpetually shifting and varying, even while *within the verge* of his own nature; but is frequently flying out into each extreme, both *above* and *below* it: Now associating in

NOTES.

VER. 91. *The throne a Bigot keep, a Genius quit,*] Philip V, of Spain, who, after renouncing the throne for Religion, resumed it to gratify his Queen; and Victor Amadeus II, King of Sardinia, who resigned the crown, and trying to reassume it, was imprisoned till his death. P.

VER. 93. *Europe a Woman, Child, or Dotard rule,—*
And just her wisest monarch made a fool?
The Czarina, the King of France, the Pope, and the abovementioned King of Sardinia.

VER. 95. *Know God, and Nature, &c.*] By *Nature* is not here meant any imaginary substitute of God, called a *Plastic nature*; but God's *moral laws*: And this observation was inserted with great propriety and discretion, in the conclusion of a long detail of the various characters of men: For, from the discording estimate of human actions, arising from the discordancy of men's characters, *Montagne* and others have been bold enough to insinuate, that mo-

A bird of passage! gone as soon as found;
Now in the Moon perhaps, now under ground.

In vain the sage, with retrospective eye,
Would from th' apparent What conclude the Why,

COMMENTARY.

good earnest with Brutes; and now again affecting the imaginary conversation of Angels. [See *Essay on Man*, Ep. ii. v 8.]

“ A bird of passage! gone as soon as found;

“ Now in the *Moon* perhaps, now *under ground*.

II.

VER. 99. *In vain the sage, &c.*] The Author having shewn the difficulties in coming to the knowledge and true characters of men, enters now upon the second division of his Poem, which is *of the wrong means that both Philosophers and Men of the world have employed in surmounting those difficulties*. He had, in the introduction, spoken of the absurd conduct of both, in despising the assistance of each other: He now justifies his censure by an examination of their peculiar doctrines; and, to take them in their own way, considers them, as they would be considered, *separately*. And first, of the *Philosopher*, whose principal mistake is in supposing *that actions best decipher the motive of the actor*. This he confutes (from v 98 to 109.) by shewing that *different actions* proceed often from the *same motive*; whether of *accident*, as disappointed views; or of *temperature*, as an adust complexion; which he thus illustrates,

“ Behold! if Fortune or a Mistress frowns, &c.

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ality is founded more in custom and fashion than in the nature of things. The speaking therefore of a *moral law of God*, as having all the constancy and durability of his *Essence*, had an high expediency in this place.

Infer the Motive from the Deed, and shew, 101

That what we chanc'd was what we meant to do.

Behold! if Fortune or a Mistress frowns,

Some plunge in bus'ness, others shave their crowns:

To ease the Soul of one oppressive weight, 105

This quits an Empire, that embroils a State:

The same adust complexion has impell'd

Charles to the Convent, Philip to the Field.

Not always Actions shew the man: we find

Who does a kindness, is not therefore kind; 110

COMMENTARY.

In judging therefore of *motives* by *actions*, the Philosopher must needs be frequently mistaken; because the passion or appetite, which, when impelling to *action*, we call the *motive*, may be equally gratified in the pursuit of very different measures.

VER. 109. *Not always actions shew the man: &c.*] The Philosopher's second mistake is, that *actions decipher the character of the actor*. This too, the Author confutes (from *ψ* 108 to 135.) and, as in correcting the foregoing mistake, he proved, *that different actions often proceed from the same motive*; so here he proves, *that the same action often proceeds from different motives*: thus a *kind action*, he observes, as commonly ariseth from the accidents of prosperity or fine weather, as from a natural disposition to humanity; a *modest action*, as well from pride, as humility; a *brave action* as easily from habit or fashion, as magnanimity; and

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VER. 107. *The same adust complexion has impell'd*

Charles to the Convent, Philip to the Field.]

Philip II, was of an atrabilaire complexion. He derived it from his father Charles V, whose health, the historians

Perhaps Prosperity becalm'd his breast;
 Perhaps the Wind just shifted from the east:
 Not therefore humble he who seeks retreat,
 Pride guides his steps, and bids him shun the great:
 Who combats bravely is not therefore brave, 115
 He dreads a death-bed like the meanest slave:
 Who reasons wisely is not therefore wise,
 His pride in Reas'ning, not in Acting lies.

C O M M E N T A R Y.

a prudent action as often from vanity, as wisdom. Now the character being really determined by the motives, and various, nay contrary motives producing the same action, the action can never decipher the character of the actor. But further (continues the Poet) if we attend to what hath been said, we shall discover another circumstance in the case, which will not only make it extremely difficult, but absolutely impracticable to decipher the character by the action: and that is, the discordancy of action in the same character; a necessary consequence of the two principles proved above, that different actions proceed from the same motive, and that the same action proceeds from different motives.

N O T E S.

of his life tell us, was frequently disordered by bilious fevers. But what the Author meant principally to observe here was, that this humour made both these princes act contrary to their character; Charles, who was an active man, when he retired into a Convent; Philip, who was a man of the closet, when he gave the battle of St. Quintin.

VER. 117. *Who reasons wisely, &c.*] By reasoning is not here meant *speculating*; but deliberating and resolving in public counsels: for this instance is given as one, of a variety of actions.

But grant that Actions best discover man;
 Take the most strong, and sort them as you can. 120
 The few that glare, each character must mark,
 You balance not the many in the dark.
 What will you do with such as disagree?
 Suppress them, or miscall them Policy?
 Must then at once (the character to save) 125
 The plain rough Hero turn a crafty Knave!
 Alas! in truth the man but chang'd his mind,
 Perhaps was sick, in love, or had not din'd.

COMMENTARY.

VER. 119. *But grant that Actions, &c.*] But (continues our Author) if you will judge of man by his *actions*, you are not to select such only as you like, or can manage; you must fairly take all, you find: Now, when you have got these together, they will prove so very discordant that no consistent character can possibly be made out of them. What is to be done then? Will you *suppress* all those you cannot reconcile to the few capital actions which you chuse for the foundation of your character? But this the laws of truth will not permit. Will you then *miscall* them? and say they were not the natural workings of the man, but the disguises of the politician? But what will you get by this, besides reversing the best known character, and making the owner of it the direct opposite of himself? However, (says our Author) this is the way which the reasoning and philosophic historian has been always ready to take with the *actions* of great men; of which he gives two famous instances in the life of Cæsar. The conclusion, from the whole, is, that *actions do not shew the man.*

Ask why from Britain Cæsar would retreat?
 Cæsar himself might whisper he was beat. 130
 Why risk the world's great empire for a Punk?
 Cæsar perhaps might answer he was drunk.
 But, sage historians! 'tis your task to prove
 One action Conduct; one, heroic Love.

V A R I A T I O N S.

VER. 129. in the former Editions,

Ask why from Britain Cæsar made retreat?
 Cæsar himself would tell you he was beat.
 The mighty Czar what mov'd to wed a Punk?
 The mighty Czar would tell you he was drunk.

Alter'd as above, because Cæsar wrote his Commentaries of this war, and does *not* tell you he was beat. And as Cæsar afforded an instance of both cases, it was thought better to make him the single example.

N O T E S.

VER. 130. *Cæsar himself might whisper he was beat.*]
 Cæsar wrote his *Commentaries*, in imitation of the greek Generals, for the entertainment of the world: But had his friend asked him, in his ear, the reason of his sudden retreat from Britain, after so many pretended victories, we have cause to suspect, even from his own public relation of that matter, that he would have *whisper'd he was beat.*

VER. 131. *Why risk the world's great empire for a Punk?*]
 After the battle of Pharsalia, Cæsar pursued his enemy to Alexandria, where he became infatuated with the charms of Cleopatra, and instead of pushing his advantages, and dispersing the relicks of the Pharsalian quarrel (after narrowly escaping the violence of an enraged populace) he brought upon himself an unnecessary war, at a time his arms were most wanted elsewhere.

'Tis from high Life high Characters are drawn:
 A Saint in Crape is twice a Saint in Lawn; 136
 A Judge is just, a Chanc'lor juster still;
 A Gownman, learn'd; a Bishop, what you will;
 Wise, if a Minister; but, if a King,
 More wise, more learn'd, more just, more ev'ry thing.
 Court-Virtues bear, like Gems, the highest rate, 141
 Born where Heav'n's influence scarce can penetrate:
 In life's low vale, the soil the Virtues like,
 They please as beauties, here as wonders strike.

COMMENTARY.

VER. 135. *'Tis from high Life, &c.*] The Poet having done with the *Philosophen*, now turns to the *Man of the world*; whose *first* mistake is in supposing men's true *Characters may be known by their station*. This, tho' a mere mob-opinion, is the opinion in fashion, and cherished by the Mob of all ranks; therefore, tho' beneath the Poet's reasoning, he thought it deserving of his ridicule; and the strongest was what he gives (from v. 134 to 141.) a naked exposition of the fact; to which he has subjoined (from v. 140 to 149.) an ironical apology, that, as Virtue is cultivated with infinitely more labour in Courts than in Cottages, it is but just to set an infinitely higher value on it; which, says he with much pleasantry, is most agreeable to all the fashionable ways of estimation. For why do the connoisseurs prefer the lively colour in a Gem before that in a Flower, but for its extreme rarity and difficulty of production?

NOTES.

VER. 141. *Court-virtues bear, like Gems, &c.*] This whole reflection, and the similitude brought to support it, have great delicacy of ridicule, together with all the charms of Poetry.

Tho' the same sun with all-diffusive rays 145
 Blush in the rose, and in the Di'mond blaze,
 We prize the stronger effort of his pow'r,
 And justly set the Gem above the Flow'r.

'Tis Education forms the common mind,
 Just as the Twig is bent, the Tree's inclin'd. 150
 Boastful and rough, your first son is a 'Squire;
 The next a Tradesman, meek, and much a lyar;
 Tom struts a Soldier, open, bold, and brave;
 Will sneaks a Scriv'ner, an exceeding knave: - 154
 Is he a Churchman? then he's fond of pow'r:
 A Quaker? fly: A Presbyterian? sow'r:
 A smart Free-thinker? all things in an hour.

C O M M E N T A R Y.

VER. 149. *'Tis Education forms, &c.*] This second mistake of the *Man of the world* is more serious; it is, that *characters are best judged of by the general manners*. This the Poet confutes in a lively enumeration of examples (from v 148 to 158.) which shew, that how similar or different soever the *manners* be by *nature*, yet they are all new model'd by *education* and *Profession*; where each man invariably receives that exotic form, which the mould he falls into is fitted to imprint. The *natural character* therefore can never be judged of by these *fictitious manners*.

N O T E S.

VER. 152. *The next a Tradesman, meek, and much a lyar;*] "The only glory of a Tradesman (says Hobbes) is to grow excessively rich by the wisdom of buying and selling." A pursuit very wide of all *vain-glory*; so that if he be given to *lying*, it is certainly on a more substantial motive; and will therefore rather deserve the name which this Philosophy gives it, of *wisdom*. SCRIBL.

Ask men's Opinions: Scoto now shall tell
 How trade increafes, and the world goes well;
 Strike off his Penfion, by the fetting fun, 160
 And Britain, if not Europe, is undone.

That gay Free-thinker, a fine talker once,
 What turns him now a ftupid filent dunce?
 Some God, or Spirit he has lately found;
 Or chanc'd to meet a Minifter that frown'd. 165

Judge we by Nature? Habit can efface,
 Int'reft o'ercome, or Policy take place:

COMMENTARY.

VER. 185. *Ask men's Opinions: &c.*] The third mistake is in judging of men's characters by their *opinions, and turn of thinking*. But thefe, the Poet fhews by two examples (from *ſ* 157 to 166.) are generally fwayed by *interest*, both in the *affairs of life* and *speculation*.

VER. 166. *Judge we by Nature, &c.*] The Poet having gone thro' the mistakes both of the *Philosopher* and *Man of the world*, feparately; turns now to both; and (from *ſ* 165 to 174.) jointly addreffes them in a recapitulation of his reasoning againft *each*: He fhews, that if we pretend to develope the *character* by the *natural difpofition in general*, we fhall find it extremely difficult, becaufe this is often

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VER. 164, 165. *Some God, or Spirit he has lately found;*

Or chanc'd to meet a Minifter that frown'd.]

Disafters the moft unlooked for, as they were what the Free-thinker's *speculations* and *practice* were principally directed to avoid.—The Poet here alludes to the antient claffical opinion, that the fudden vifion of a God was ufed to ftrike the irreverend obferver, fpeechlefs. He has only a little extended the conceit, and fupposed, that the terrors

By Actions? those Uncertainty divides:

By Passions? these Diffimulation hides:

Opinions? they still take a wider range: 170

Find, if you can, in what you cannot change.

Manners with Fortunes, Humours turn with Climes,
Tenets with Books, and Principles with Times.

COMMENTARY.

effaced by *habit*, overswayed by *interest*, and suspended by *policy*.—If by *actions*, their contrariety will leave us in utter doubt and uncertainty.—If by *passions*, we shall be perpetually misled by the mask of Diffimulation.—If by *opinions*, all these concur together to perplex the enquiry. Shew us, then, says he, in the whole range of your *philosophy* and *experience*, the thing we can be certain of: For (to sum up all in a word)

“ *Manners with Fortunes, Humours turn with Climes,*

“ *Tenets with Books, and Principles with Times.*

We must seek therefore some other road to the point we aim at.

NOTES.

of a Court-God might have the like effect on a very devoted worshiper. SCRIBL.

V. 172, 3. *Manners with Fortunes, Humours turn with Climes, Tenets with Books, and Principles with Times.*]

The Poet had hitherto reckoned up the several *simple* causes which hinder our knowledge of the natural characters of men. In these two fine lines, he describes the *complicated* causes. *Humours* bear the same relation to *manners*, that *principles* do to *tenets*; that is, the former are *modes* of the latter; our *manners* (says the Poet) are warped from nature by our *fortunes* or *stations*; our *tenets*, by our *books* or *Professions*; and then each drawn still more oblique, into

Search then the RULING PASSION: There, alone,
 The Wild are constant, and the Cunning known;
 The Fool consistent, and the False sincere; 176
 Priests, Princes, Women, no dissemblers here.
 This clue once found, unravels all the rest,
 The prospect clears, and Wharton stands confest.
 Wharton, the scorn and wonder of our days, 180
 Whose ruling Passion was the Lust of Praise:

COMMENTARY.

III.

VER. 174. *Search then the Ruling Passion: &c.*] And now we enter on the *third* and last part; which treats of the *right means* of surmounting the difficulties in coming to the *knowledge* and *characters of men*: This the Poet shews, is *by investigating the RULING PASSION*: of whose origin and nature we may find an exact account in the second Ep. of the *Essay on Man*. This *Principle* he rightly observes (from ψ 173 to 180.) is the clue which must guide us through all the intricacies in the ways of men: To convince us of this, he applies it (from ψ 179 to 210.) to the most wild and inconsistent character that ever was; which (when drawn out at length, as we here find it, in a spirit of poetry as rare as the character itself) we see, this *Principle* unravels, and renders throughout one plain consistent thread.

NOTES.

humour, and *political principles*, by the temperature of the *climate*, and the constitution of the *government*.

VER. 174. *Search then the Ruling Passion:*] See *Essay on Man*, Ep. ii. ψ 133. & seq.

VER. 181. *The Lust of Praise:*] This very well expresses the *grossness* of his appetite for it; where the strength of the passion had destroyed all the delicacy of the sensation.

Born with whate'er could win it from the Wise;
 Women and Fools must like him or he dies;
 Tho' wond'ring Senates hung on all he spoke,
 The Club must hail him master of the joke. 185
 Shall parts so various aim at nothing new?
 He'll shine a Tully and a Wilmot too.
 Then turns repentant, and his God adores
 With the same spirit that he drinks and whores;
 Enough, if all around him but admire, 190
 And now the Punk applaud, and now the Fryer.
 Thus with each gift of nature and of art,
 And wanting nothing but an honest heart;
 Grown all to all, from no one vice exempt;
 And most contemptible, to shun contempt; 195

N O T E S.

VER. 187. John Wilmot, E. of Rochester, famous for his Wit and Extravagancies in the time of Charles the Second. P.

VER. 189. *With the same spirit*] *Spirit* for principle, not passion.

VER. 190. *Enough, if all around him but admire, &c.*] What an able french Writer observes of *Alcibiades* may be justly applied to this nobleman. "Ce n'étoit pas un
 " *ambitieux*, mais un homme *vain*, qui vouloit fair du
 " bruit, et occuper les Atheniens. Il avoit l'*esprit* d'un
 " grand homme; mais son *ame*, dont les ressorts amollis
 " étoient devenus incapables d'une application constante,
 " ne pouvoit s'élever au grand, que par boutade. J'ai
 " bien de la peine à croire, qu'un homme assez souple, pour
 " être à Sparte aussi dur & aussi sévère, qu'un Spartiate;
 " dans l'Ionie aussi recherché dans ses plaisirs qu'un Io-
 " nien, &c. fût propre à faire un grand homme."

His Passion still, to covet gen'ral praise,
 His Life, to forfeit it a thousand ways;
 A constant Bounty which no friend has made;
 An angel Tongue, which no man can persuade;
 A Fool, with more of Wit than half mankind, 200
 Too rash for Thought, for Action too refin'd:
 A Tyrant to the wife his heart approves;
 A Rebel to the very king he loves;
 He dies, sad out-cast of each church and state,
 And, harder still! flagitious, yet not great. 205
 Ask you why Wharton broke thro' ev'ry rule?
 'Twas all for fear the Knaves should call him Fool.

NOTES.

VER. 200. *A Fool, with more of Wit] Folly, joined with much wit, produces that behaviour which we call absurdity; and this absurdity the Poet has here admirably described in the words,*

“ Too rash for Thought, for Action too refin'd.

by which we are given to understand, that the person described, indulged his fancy when he should have used his judgment; and pursued his speculations when he should have trusted to his experience.

VER. 205. *And, harder still! flagitious, yet not great.] To arrive at what the world calls Greatness, a man must either hide and conceal his vices, or he must openly and steadily practise them in the pursuit and attainment of one important end. This unhappy nobleman did neither.*

VER. 207. *'Twas all for fear, &c.] To understand this, we must observe, that the lust of general praise made the person, whose character is here so admirably drawn, both extravagant and flagitious; his madness was to please the fools,*

Nature well known, no prodigies remain,
Comets are regular, and Wharton plain.

Yet, in this search, the wisest may mistake, 210
If second qualities for first they take.

V A R I A T I O N S.

In the former Editions, *ŷ* 208.

Nature well known, no *Miracles* remain.
Alter'd as above, for very obvious reasons.

C O M M E N T A R Y.

VER. 210. *Yet, in this search, &c.*] But here (from *ŷ* 209 to 222.) he gives one very necessary caution, that, in developing the *Ruling Passion*, we must be careful not to mistake a *subsidiary* passion for the *principal*; which, without great attention, we may be very liable to do; as the *subsidiary*, acting in support of the *principal*, has frequently all its vigour and much of its perseverance: This error has misled several both of the ancient and modern historians; as when they supposed *lust* and *luxury* to be charac-

N O T E S.

“ *Women and Fools* must like him, or he dies.
And his *crimes*, to avoid the censure of the *Knaves*,

“ ’Twas all for fear the *Knaves* should call him Fool.
Prudence and *Honesty* being the two qualities which fools and knaves are most interested, and consequently most industrious, to misrepresent.

VER. 209. *Comets are regular, and Wharton plain.*] This illustration has an exquisite beauty, arising from the exactness of the analogy: For, as the appearance of irregularity, in a COMET’S motion, is occasioned by the greatness of the *force* which pushes it round a very eccentric orb; so it is the *violence* of the RULING PASSION, which, impa-

When Catiline by rapine swell'd his store;
 When Cæsar made a noble dame a whore;
 In this the Lust, in that the Avarice
 Were means, not ends ! Ambition was the vice. 215

COMMENTARY.

teristics of Cæsar and Lucullus ; whereas, in truth, the *Ruling Passion* of both was *ambition* ; which is so certain, that, at whatsoever different time of the Republic these men had lived, their *ambition*, as the *Ruling Passion*, had been the same ; but a different time had changed their *subsidiary* ones of *lust* and *luxury*, into their very opposites of *chastity* and *frugality*. 'Tis in vain, therefore, says our Author, for the observer of human nature to fix his attention on the workman, if he all the while mistakes the scaffold for the building.

NOTES.

tient for its object, in the impetuosity of its course towards it, is frequently hurried to an immense distance from it ; and this it is which occasions all that puzzling inconsistency of conduct, we observe in it.

VER. 213.—*A noble Dame a whore ;*] The sister of Cato, and mother of Brutus.

VER. 215. *Ambition was the vice.*] *Pride*, *Vanity*, and *Ambition* are such bordering and neighbouring vices, and hold so much in common, that we generally find them going together ; and therefore, as generally mistake them for one another. This does not a little contribute to our confounding characters ; for they are, in reality, very different and distinct ; so much so, that 'tis remarkable, the three greatest men in Rome, and contemporaries, possessed each of these passions separately, without the least mixture of the other two : The men I mean were Cæsar, Cato, and Cicero : For Cæsar had *ambition* without either vanity or pride ; Cato had *pride* without ambition or vanity ; and Cicero had *vanity* without pride or ambition.

That very Cæsar born in Scipio's days,
 Had aim'd, like him, by Chastity at praise.
 Lucullus, when Frugality could charm,
 Had roasted turnips in the Sabin farm.

In vain th' observer eyes the builder's toil, 220
 But quite mistakes the scaffold for the pile.
 In this one Passion man can strength enjoy,
 As Fits give vigour, just when they destroy.

C O M M E N T A R Y.

VER. 222. *In this one Passion, &c.*] But now it may be objected to our philosophic Poet, that he has indeed shewn *the true means* of coming to the *knowledge and characters of men*, by a *Principle* certain and infallible, when found; yet it is, by his own account, of so difficult investigation, that its Counterfeit (and it is always attended with one) may be easily mistaken for it. To remove this difficulty, therefore, and consequently the objection that arises from it, the Poet has given (from v. 221 to 228.) one certain and infallible criterion of the *Ruling Passion*; which is this, that all the *other* passions, in the course of time, change and wear away; while *this* is ever constant and vigorous; and still going on from strength to strength, to the very moment of its demolishing the miserable machine which it has now at length, over-worked. Of this great truth, the Poet (from ver. 227 to the end) gives various instances, in all the principal *Ruling Passions* of our nature, as they are to be found in the *Man of business*, the *Man of pleasure*, the

N O T E S.

VER. 223. *As Fits give vigour, just when they destroy.*] The similitude is extremely apposite; as most of the instances he has afterwards given of the vigorous exertion of the *Ruling Passion* in the last moments, are from such who had hastened their death by an immoderate indulgence of *that* passion.

Time, that on all things lays his lenient hand,
Yet tames not this ; it sticks to our last sand. 225

Consistent in our follies and our sins,
Here honest Nature ends as she begins.

Old Politicians chew on wisdom past,
And totter on in bus'ness to the last ;
As weak, as earnest ; and as gravely out, 230
As sober Laneb'row dancing in the gout.

Behold a rev'rend fire, whom want of grace
Has made the father of a nameless race,
Shov'd from the wall perhaps, or rudely press'd
By his own son, that passes by unblest'd: 235

COMMENTARY.

Epicure, the Parsimonious, the Toast, the Courtier, the Miser, and the Patriot ; which last instance, the Poet has had the art, under the appearance of satire, to turn into the noblest compliment on the person to whom the epistle is addressed.

NOTES.

VER. 225.—*It sticks to our last sand.*] “ M. de Lagny
“ mourut le 12 Avril, 1734. Dans les derniers momens,
“ ou il ne connoissoit plus aucun de ceux qui étoient au-
“ tour de son lit, quelqu'un, pour faire une experience
“ philosophique, s'avisa de lui demander quel étoit le
“ quarré de douze : Il repondit dans l'instant, et appare-
“ ment sans savoir qu'il repondit, cent quarante quatre.”
Fontanelle, Eloge de M. de Lagny.

VER. 227. *Here honest Nature ends as she begins.*] Human nature is here humorously called *honest*, as the impulse of the *ruling passion* (which she gives and cherishes) makes her more and more impatient of disguise.

VER. 231. *Laneb'row*] An ancient Nobleman, who con-

Still to his wench he crawls on knocking knees,
And envies ev'ry sparrow that he sees.

A salmon's belly, Helluo, was thy fate;
The doctor call'd, declares all help too late:

“ Mercy! cries Helluo, mercy on my soul! 240

“ Is there no hope?—Alas!—then bring the jowl.”

The frugal Crone, whom praying priests attend,
Still tries to save the hallow'd taper's end,
Collects her breath, as ebbing life retires,
For one puff more, and in that puff expires. 245

“ Odious! in woollen! 'twould a Saint provoke,
(Were the last words that poor Narcissa spoke)

“ No, let a charming Chintz, and Brussels lace

“ Wrap my cold limbs, and shade my lifeless face:

“ One would not, sure, be frightful when one's dead—

“ And—Betty—give this Cheek a little Red.” 251

The Courtier smooth, who forty years had shin'd
An humble servant to all human kind,

NOTES.

tinued this practice long after his legs were disabled by the gout. Upon the death of Prince George of Denmark, he demanded an audience of the Queen, to advise her to preserve her health and dispel her grief by *Dancing*. P.

VER. 242. *The frugal Crone,*] A fact told him, by Lady Bol. of an old Countess at Paris.

VER. 247.—*the last words that poor Narcissa spoke*] This story, as well as the others, is founded on fact, tho' the author had the goodness not to mention the names. Several attribute this in particular to a very celebrated Actress, who, in detestation of the thought of being buried in woollen, gave these her last orders with her dying breath. P.

Just brought out this, when scarce his tongue could stir,
 “ If—where I’m going—I could serve you, Sir? ”

“ I give and I devise (old Euclio said, 256

And sigh’d) “ my lands and tenements to Ned.

Your money, Sir?—“ My money, Sir, what all?

“ Why,—if I must—(then wept) I give it Paul.

“ The Manor, Sir?—“ The Manor! hold, he cry’d,

“ Not that,—I cannot part with that”—and dy’d.

And you! brave COBHAM, to the latest breath
 Shall feel your ruling passion strong in death:

Such in those moments as in all the past;

“ Oh, save my Country, Heav’n! ” shall be your last.

NOTES.

VER. 255.] A Pawnbroker of Paris, in his last agonies, observing that the Priest, as usual, presented a little Silver Crucifix before his eyes, mistook it for a pawn; and had just strength enough left to say, *Alas! I can afford but a small matter upon that.*

MORAL ESSAYS.

EPISTLE II.

TO A LADY.

Of the Characters of WOMEN.

NOTHING so true as what you once let fall,
 “Most Women have no Characters at all.”
 Matter too soft a lasting mark to bear,
 And best distinguish’d by black, brown, or fair.

NOTES.

Of the Characters of WOMEN] There is nothing in Mr. Pope’s works more highly finish’d, or written with greater spirit, than this Epistle: Yet its success was in no proportion to the pains he took in composing it, or the effort of genius displayed in adorning it. Something he chanced to drop in a short advertisement prefixed to it, on its first publication, may perhaps account for the small attention the Public gave to it. He said, that *no one character in it was drawn from the Life*. They believed him on his word; and expressed little curiosity about a satire in which there was nothing personal.

VER. 1. *Nothing so true, &c.*] The reader perhaps may be disappointed to find that this *epistle*, which proposes the



*In Men, we various ruling Passions find,
In Woman, two almost divide the kind;
Those only fix'd, they first or last obey,
The love of Pleasure, and the love of Sway.*
Char: of Women.

How many pictures of one Nymph we view, 5
 All how unlike each other, all how true?

NOTES.

same subject with the preceding, is conducted on very different rules of composition; for instead of being disposed in the same logical method, and filled with the like philosophical remarks, it is wholly taken up in drawing a great variety of capital characters: But if he would reflect, that the *two Sexes* make but *one Species*, and consequently, that the characters of both must be studied and explain'd on the same principles, he would see, that when the Poet had done this in the preceding epistle, his business here was, not to repeat what he had already delivered, but only to verify and illustrate his doctrine, by every *view* of that perplexity of Nature, which *his* philosophy only can explain. If the reader therefore will but be at the pains to study these characters with any degree of attention, as they are drawn with a force of wit, sublimity, and true poetry never hitherto equalled, one important particular (for which the Poet has artfully prepared him by the introduction) will very forcibly strike his observation; and that is, that all the great strokes in the several characters of *Women* are not only infinitely perplexed and discordant, like those in *Men*, but absolutely inconsistent, and in a much higher degree contradictory. As strange as this may appear, yet he will see that the Poet has all the while strictly followed Nature, whose ways, we find by the former epistle, are not a little mysterious; and a mystery this might have remained, had not our Author explained it at ver. 207. where he shuts up his *characters* with this philosophical reflexion:

- “ In Men, we *various ruling Passions* find;
- “ In Women, *two* almost divide the kind;
- “ Those, only fix'd, they first or last obey,
- “ The love of Pleasure, and the love of Sway.

If this account be true, we see the perpetual necessity (which is not the case in *Men*) that *Women* lye under of *disguising*

Arcadia's Countess, here, in ermin'd pride,
Is there, Pastora by a fountain side.

N O T E S.

their *ruling passion*. Now the variety of arts employed to this purpose must needs draw them into infinite contradictions even in those *actions* from whence their general and obvious character is denominated: To verify this observation, let the reader examine all the characters here drawn, and try whether, with this key, he cannot discover that all their contradictions arise from a desire to *hide the ruling Passion*.

But this is not the worst. The Poet afterwards (from ver. 218 to 249.) takes notice of another mischief arising from this necessity of hiding their ruling passions; which is, that generally the end of each is defeated even there where they are most violently pursued: For the necessity of hiding them inducing an habitual dissipation of mind, Reason, whose office it is to regulate the *ruling Passion*, loses all its force and direction; and these unhappy victims to their principles, tho' with their attention *still fixed* upon them, are ever prosecuting the means destructive of their end; and thus become ridiculous in youth, and miserable in old age.

Let me not omit to observe the great beauty of the conclusion: It is an encomium on an imaginary Lady to whom the epistle is addressed; and artfully turns upon the fact which makes the subject of the epistle, the *contradiction of a Woman's character*; in which contradiction he shews, that all the lustre even of the best character consists:

“ And yet, believe me, good as well as ill,

“ Woman's at best a *contradiction* still, &c.

VER. 5. *How many pictures*] The Poet's purpose here is to shew, that the characters of Women are generally inconsistent with themselves: and this he illustrates by so happy a similitude, that we see the folly, described in it, arises from that very principle which gives birth to this inconsistency of character.

Here Fannia, leering on her own good man,
 And there, a naked Leda with a Swan. 10
 Let then the Fair one beautifully cry,
 In Magdalen's loose hair and lifted eye,
 Or drest in smiles of sweet Cecilia shine,
 With simp'ring Angels, Palms, and Harps divine;
 Whether the Charmer sinner it, or saint it, 15
 If Folly grow romantic, I must paint it.

Come then, the colours and the ground prepare!
 Dip in the Rainbow, trick her off in Air;
 Chuse a firm Cloud, before it fall, and in it 19
 Catch, ere she change, the Cynthia of this minute.

Rufa, whose eye quick-glancing o'er the Park,
 Attracts each light gay meteor of a Spark,

NOTES.

VER. 7, 8, 10, &c. *Arcadia's Countess,—Pastora by a fountain—Leda with a swan,—Magdalen,—Cecilia—*] Attitudes in which several ladies affected to be drawn, and sometimes one lady in them all.—The Poet's politeness and complaisance to the sex is observable in this instance, amongst others, that, whereas in the *Characters of Men*, he has sometimes made use of real names, in the *Characters of Women* always fictitious. P.

VER. 20. *Catch, ere she change, the Cynthia of this minute.*] Alluding to the precept of *Fresnoy*,

formæ veneres captando fugaces.

VER. 21. Instances of contrarieties, given even from such Characters as are most strongly mark'd, and seemingly therefore most consistent: As, I. In the *Affected*, ver. 21, &c.

Agrees as ill with Rufa studying Locke,
 As Sappho's di'monds with her dirty smock;
 Or Sappho at her toilet's greasy task, 25
 With Sappho fragrant at an ev'ning Mask:
 So morning Insects that in muck begun,
 Shine, buzz, and fly-blow in the setting-sun.

How soft is Silia! fearful to offend;
 The frail one's advocate, the weak one's friend. 30
 To her, Calista prov'd her conduct nice;
 And good Simplicius asks of her advice.
 Sudden, she storms! she raves! You tip the wink,
 But spare your censure; Silia does not drink.
 All eyes may see from what the change arose, 35
 All eyes may see — a Pimple on her nose.

Papillia, wedded to her am'rous spark,
 Sighs for the shades! — “How charming is a Park!”
 A Park is purchas'd, but the Fair he sees
 All bath'd in tears — “Oh odious, odious Trees!” 40

N O T E S.

VER. 23. *Agrees as ill with Rufa studying Locke,*] This thought is expressed with great humour in the following stanza:

“Tho' Artemisia talks, by fits,
 “Of councils, classics, fathers, wits;
 “Reads Malbranche, Boyle, and Locke:
 “Yet in some things, methinks, she fails,
 “'Twere well, if she wou'd pare her nails,
 “And wear a cleaner smock.

VER. 29 and 37. II. Contrarieties in the *Soft-natured*.

Ladies, like variegated Tulips, show;
 'Tis to their Changes half their charms we owe;
 Fine by defect, and delicately weak,
 Their happy Spots the nice admirer take.
 'Twas thus Calypso once each heart alarm'd, 45
 Aw'd without Virtue without Beauty charm'd;
 Her Tongue bewitch'd as odly as her Eyes;
 Less Wit than Mimic, more a Wit than wise.
 Strange graces still, and stranger flights she had,
 Was just not ugly, and was just not mad; 50
 Yet ne'er so sure our passion to create,
 As when she touch'd the brink of all we hate.

Narcissa's nature, tolerably mild,
 To make a wash, would hardly stew a child;
 Has ev'n been prov'd to grant a Lover's pray'r, 55
 And paid a Tradesman once to make him stare;
 Gave alms at Easter, in a Christian trim,
 And made a Widow happy, for a whim.
 Why then declare Good-nature is her scorn,
 When 'tis by that alone she can be born? 60

NOTES.

VER. 45. III. Contrarieties in the *Cunning* and *Artful*. P.

VER. 52. *As when she touch'd the brink of all we hate.*
 Her charms consisted in the singular turn of her vivacity;
 consequently the stronger she exerted this vivacity the
 more forcible was her attraction. But when her vivacity
 rose to that height in which it was most attractive, it was
 upon the *brink* of Excess; the point where the delicacy
 of sensuality disappears, and all the coarseness of it stands
 exposed.

VER. 53. IV. In the *Whimsical*.

P.

Why pique all mortals, yet affect a name?
 A Fool to Pleasure, yet a slave to Fame:
 Now deep in Taylor and the Book of Martyrs,
 Now drinking Citron with his Grace and Chartres:
 Now Conscience chills her, and now Passion burns:
 And Atheism and Religion take their turns; 66
 A very Heathen in the carnal part,
 Yet still a sad, good Christian at her heart.

See Sin in State majestically drunk;
 Proud as a Peerefs, prouder as a Punk; 70
 Chaste to her Husband, frank to all beside,
 A teeming Mistress, but a barren Bride.
 What then? let Blood and Body bear the fault,
 Her Head's untouch'd, that noble Seat of Thought:
 Such this day's doctrine—in another fit 75
 She sins with Poets thro' pure Love of Wit.
 What has not fir'd her bosom or her brain?
 Cæsar and Tall-boy, Charles and Charlema'ne.

VARIATIONS.

VER. 77. *What has not fir'd, &c.*] In the MS.

In whose mad brain the mixt ideas roll
 Of Tall-boy's breeches, and of Cæsar's soul.

NOTES.

VER. 57.—*in a Christian trim,*] This is finely expressed; implying that her very charity was as much an exterior of Religion, as the ceremonies of the season. It was not even in a *Christian humour*, it was only in a *Christian trim*: not so much as *habit*, only *fashion*.

VER. 69. V. In the *Lewd and Vicious*. P.

As Helluo, late Dictator of the Feast,
 The Nose of Hautgout and the Tip of Taste, 80
 Critiqu'd your wine, and analyz'd your meat,
 Yet on plain Pudding deign'd at-home to eat:
 So Philomedé, lect'ring all mankind
 On the soft Passion, and the Taste refin'd,
 Th' Address, the Delicacy—stoops at once, 85
 And makes her hearty meal upon a Dunce.

Flavia's a Wit, has too much sense to Pray;
 To toast our wants and wishes, is her way;
 Nor asks of God, but of her Stars, to give
 The mighty blessing, "While we live, to live." 90
 Then all for Death, that Opiate of the soul!
 Lucretia's dagger, Rosamonda's bowl.
 Say, what can cause such impotence of mind?
 A Spark too fickle, or a Spouse too kind.
 Wise Wretch! with pleasures too refin'd to please;
 With too much Spirit to be e'er at ease: 96
 With too much Quickness ever to be taught;
 With too much Thinking to have common Thought:
 You purchase Pain with all that Joy can give,
 And die of nothing but a Rage to live. 100

Turn then from Wits; and look on Simo's Mate,
 No Afs so meek, no Afs so obstinate.

NOTES.

VER. 87. Contrarieties in the *Witty* and *Refin'd*. P.

VER. 89. *Nor asks of God, but of her Stars—Death, that Opiate of the soul!*] See Note on ver. 90. of Ep. to Lord Cobham.

Or her, that owns her Faults, but never mends,
 Because she's honest, and the best of Friends.
 Or her, whose life the Church and Scandal share,
 For ever in a Passion, or a Pray'r. 106

Or her, who laughs at Hell, but (like her Grace)
 Cries, "Ah! how charming if there's no such place!"
 Or who in sweet vicissitude appears

Of Mirth and Opium, Ratafie and Tears, 110

The daily Anodyne, and nightly Draught,
 To kill those foes to fair ones, Time and Thought.
 Woman and Fool are two hard things to hit;
 For true No-meaning puzzles more than Wit.

But what are these to great Atossa's mind? 115
 Scarce once herself, by turns all Womankind!

Who, with herself, or others, from her birth
 Finds all her life one warfare upon earth:
 Shines, in exposing Knaves, and painting Fools,
 Yet is, whate'er she hates and ridicules. 120
 No Thought advances, but her Eddy Brain
 Whisks it about, and down it goes again.

V A R I A T I O N S.

After ver. 122. in the MS.

Oppress'd with wealth and wit, abundance sad!
 One makes her poor, the other makes her mad.

N O T E S.

VER. 107. *Or her, who laughs at Hell, but (like her Grace)
 Cries, "Ah! how charming, if there's no such
 place!"]*

i. e. Her, who affects to laugh, out of *fashion*; and strives,
 to disbelieve, out of *fear*.

Full sixty years the World has been her Trade,
The wisest Fool much Time has ever made.

From loveless youth to unrespected age, 125
No Passion gratify'd except her Rage.

So much the Fury still out-ran the Wit,
The Pleasure miss'd her, and the Scandal hit.

Who breaks with her, provokes Revenge from Hell,
But he's a bolder man who dares be well. 130

Her ev'ry turn with Violence pursu'd,
Nor more a storm her Hate than gratitude:
To that, each Passion turns, or soon or late;
Love, if it makes her yield, must make her hate:

Superiors? death! and Equals? what a curse; 135
But an Inferior not dependant? worse.

Offend her, and she knows not to forgive;
Oblige her, and she'll hate you while you live:

But die, and she'll adore you—Then the Bust
And Temple rise—then fall again to dust. 140

Last night, her Lord was all that's good and great;
A Knave this morning, and his Will a Cheat.

Strange! by the Means defeated of the Ends,
By Spirit robb'd of Pow'r, by Warmth of Friends,
By Wealth of Follow'rs! without one distress 145

Sick of herself thro' very selfishness!

Atossa, curs'd with ev'ry granted pray'r,
Childless with all her Children, wants an Heir.

VARIATIONS.

After ver. 148 in the MS.

This Death decides, nor lets the blessing fall
On any one she hates, but on them all.

To Heirs unknown descends th' unguarded store,
Or wanders, Heav'n-directed, to the Poor. 150

Pictures like these, dear Madam, to design,
Asks no firm hand, and no unerring line;
Some wand'ring touches, some reflected light,
Some flying stroke alone can hit 'em right:
For how should equal Colours do the knack? 155
Chameleons who can paint in white and black?

V A R I A T I O N S.

Curs'd chance! this only could afflict her more,
If any part should wander to the poor.

N O T E S.

VER. 150. *Or wanders, Heav'n-directed, &c.*] Alluding and referring to the great principle of his Philosophy, which he never loses sight of; and which teaches, that Providence is incessantly turning the evils, arising from the follies and vices of men, to general good.

VER. 156. *Chameleons who can paint in white and black?*] There is one thing that does a very distinguished honour to the accuracy of our Poet's judgment, of which, in the course of these observations, I have given many instances. I shall here explain in what it consists; it is this, that the *Similitudes* in his didactic poems, of which he is not sparing, and which are all highly poetical, are always chosen with such exquisite discernment of Nature, as not only to illustrate the particular point he is upon, but to establish the general principles he would enforce; so, in the instance before us, he compares the inconstancy and contradiction in the characters of women, to the change of colours in the chameleon; yet 'tis nevertheless the great principle of this poem to shew that the general characteristic of the sex, as to the *ruling passions*, which they all have, is more uniform than that in man: Now for this

“ Yet Cloe sure was form’d without a spot.”—
Nature in her then err’d not, but forgot.

“ With ev’ry pleasing, ev’ry prudent part,

“ Say, what can Cloe want? ”—She wants a Heart.

She speaks, behaves, and acts just as she ought; 161

But never, never, reach’d one gen’rous Thought.

Virtue she finds too painful an endeavour,

Content to dwell in Decencies for ever.

So very reasonable, so unmov’d, 165

As never yet to love, or to be lov’d.

She, while her lover pants upon her breast,

Can mark the figures on an Indian chest:

NOTES.

purpose, all Nature could not have supplied such another illustration as this of the chameleon; for tho’ it instantaneously assumes much of the colour of every subject on which it chances to be placed, yet, as the most accurate of the *Virtuosi* have observed, it has *two* native colours of its own, which, (like the *two ruling passions* in the Sex, see ver. 208.) amidst all these changes, are never totally discharged; but, tho’ often discoloured by the neighbourhood of adventitious ones, still make the foundation, and give a tincture to all those which, from thence, it occasionally assumes.

VER. 157. “ *Yet Cloe sure, &c.*] The purpose of the Poet in this character is important: it is to shew, that the politic or prudent government of the passions is not enough to make a character amiable, nor even to secure it from being ridiculous, if the *end* of that government be not pursued; which is the free exercise of the social appetites, after the selfish ones have been subdued; for that if, tho’ reason govern, the heart be never consulted, we interest ourselves as little in the fortune of such a character, as in

And when she sees her Friend in deep despair,
 Observes how much a Chintz exceeds Mohair. 170
 Forbid it Heav'n, a Favour or a Debt
 She e'er should cancel!—but she may forget.
 Safe is your Secret still in Cloe's ear;
 But none of Cloe's shall you ever hear.
 Of all her Dears she never slander'd one, 175
 But cares not if a thousand are undone.
 Would Cloe know if you're alive or dead?
 She bids her Footman put it in her head.
 Cloe is prudent—Would you too be wise:
 Then never break your heart when Cloe dies. 180

One certain Portrait may (I grant) be seen,
 Which Heav'n has varnish'd out, and made a *Queen*:
 THE SAME FOR EVER! and describ'd by all
 With Truth and Goodness, as with Crown and Ball,
 Poets heap Virtues, Painters Gems at will, 185
 And shew their zeal, and hide their want of skill.
 'Tis well—but, Artists; who can paint or write,
 To draw the Naked is your true delight.

N O T E S.

any of the foregoing, which passions or caprice drive up and down at random.

VER. 181. *One certain Portrait—the same for ever—*] This is entirely ironical; and conveys under it this general moral truth, that there is, in life, no such thing as a perfect character; so that the satire falls not on any particular *Character*, or Station; but on the *Character-maker* only. See Note on ver. 78. i Dialogue 1738.

That Robe of Quality so struts and swells,
 None see what Parts of Nature it conceals: 190
 Th' exactest traits of Body or of Mind,
 We owe to models of an humble kind.
 If QUEENSBERRY to strip there's no compelling,
 'Tis from a Handmaid we must take a Helen.
 From Peer or Bishop 'tis no easy thing 195
 To draw the man who loves his God, or King:
 Alas! I copy (or my draught would fail)
 From honest Mah'met, or plain Parson Hale.

VARIATIONS.

After ver. 198. in the MS.

Fain I'd in Fulvia spy the tender Wife;
 I cannot prove it on her, for my life:
 And, for a noble pride, I blush no less,
 Instead of Berenice to think on Bess.
 Thus while immortal Cibber only sings
 (As * and H**y preach) for queens and kings,
 The nymph, that ne'er read Milton's mighty line,
 May, if she love, and merit verse, have mine.

What, *Love verse*, and not *read Milton*? the Ladies will say. Yes. This is the very truth the Poet would insinuate. He supposes it, not to be the love of verse, but of the fashion, which engages them in this amusement. He therefore promises that the fair reader who is without AFFECTATION, and is yet mistress of the most amiable of those female virtues which that ridiculous vice quickly eradicates, shall have his verse, to make her amends for her unfashionable modesty.

NOTES.

VER. 198. *Mah'met*, servant to the late King, said to be the son of a Turkish Bassa, whom he took at the Siege of Buda, and constantly kept about his person. P.

But grant, in Public Men sometimes are shown,
 A Woman's seen in Private life alone : 200
 Our bolder Talents in full light display'd ;
 Your Virtues open fairest in the shade.
 Bred to disguise, in Public 'tis you hide ;
 There, none distinguish 'twixt your Shame or Pride,
 Weakness or Delicacy ; all so nice, 205
 That each may seem a Virtue, or a Vice.

In Men, we various Ruling Passions find ;
 In Women, two almost divide the kind ;

V A R I A T I O N S.

VER. 207. in the first Edition,

In sev'ral Men we sev'ral passions find ;
 In Women, two almost divide the Kind.

N O T E S.

VER. 198. Dr. *Stephen Hale* ; not more estimable for his useful discoveries as a natural Philosopher, than for his exemplary life and pastoral charity as a parish priest.

VER. 199. *But grant, in Public, &c.*] In the former Editions, between this and the foregoing lines, a want of Connexion might be perceived, occasioned by the omission of certain *Examples* and *Illustrations* to the Maxims laid down ; and tho' some of these have since been found, viz. the Characters of *Philomede*, *Atossa*, *Cloe*, and some verses following, others are still wanting, nor can we answer that these are exactly inserted. P.

VER. 203. *Bred to disguise, in Public 'tis you hide ;*] There is something apparently exceptionable in the turn of this assertion, which makes their *disguising in public* the natural effect of their being *bred to disguise* : but if we consider that female education is an art of teaching, not to *be* but

Those, only fix'd, they first or last obey,
The Love of Pleasure, and the Love of Sway. 210

That, Nature gives; and where the lesson taught
Is but to please, can Pleasure seem a fault?
Experience, this; by Man's oppression curst,
They seek the second not to lose the first.

Men, some to Bus'ness, some to Pleasure take;
But ev'ry Woman is at heart a Rake: 216

NOTES.

to *appear*, we shall have no reason to find fault with the exactness of the expression.

VER. 206. *That each may seem a Virtue, or a Vice.*] For women are taught virtue so artificially, and vice so naturally, that, in the nice exercise of them, they may be easily mistaken for one another. SCRIBL.

VER. 207. The former part having shewn, that the *particular Characters* of Women are more various than those of Men, it is nevertheless observed, that the *general Characteristic* of the sex, as to the *ruling Passion*, is more uniform. P.

VER. 211. This is occasioned partly by their *Nature*, partly their *Education*, and in some degree by *Necessity*. P.

VER. 211, 212.—*and where the lesson taught
Is but to please, can, &c.*]

The delicacy of the Poet's address is here observable, in his manner of informing us what this *pleasure* is, which makes one of the two objects of women's *ruling passion*. He does it in an ironical apology for it, arising from its being a pleasure of the *beneficent* and *communicative* kind, and not merely selfish, like those which the other sex generally pursues.

VER. 213. *Experience this, &c.*] The ironical apology continued: that the second is, as it were, forced upon them by the tyranny and oppression of man, in order to secure the first.

VER. 216. *But ev'ry Woman is at heart a Rake:*] “Some

Men, some to Quiet, some to public Strife;
But ev'ry Lady would be Queen for life.

Yet mark the fate of a whole Sex of Queens!

Pow'r all their end, but Beauty all the means: 220

In Youth they conquer, with so wild a rage,

As leaves them scarce a subject in their Age:

For foreign glory, foreign joy, they roam;

No thought of peace or happiness at home.

But Wisdom's triumph, is well-tim'd Retreat, 225

As hard a science to the Fair as Great!

Beauties, like Tyrants, old and friendless grown,

Yet hate repose, and dread to be alone,

Worn out in public, weary ev'ry eye,

Nor leave one sigh behind them when they die. 230

Pleasures the sex, as children Birds, pursue,

Still out of reach, yet never out of view;

Sure, if they catch, to spoil the Toy at most,

To covet flying, and regret when lost:

NOTES.

“men (says the Poet) take to business, some to pleasure,
“but every woman would willingly make *pleasure her business*,” which being the peculiar characteristic of a *Rake*, we must needs think that, in his use of the word here, he includes no more of the *Rake's* ill qualities than is implied in this definition, of *one who makes pleasure his business*.

VER. 219. What are the *Aims* and the *Fate* of this Sex.
—I. As to *Power*. P.

VER. 231.—II. As to *Pleasure*. P.

At last, to follies Youth could scarce defend, 235
 It grows their Age's prudence to pretend;
 Asham'd to own they gave delight before,
 Reduc'd to feign it, when they give no more:
 As Hags hold Sabbaths less for joy than spight,
 So these their merry, miserable Night; 240
 Still round and round the Ghosts of Beauty glide,
 And haunt the places where their Honour dy'd.

See how the World its Veterans rewards!
 A Youth of Frolicks, an old Age of Cards;
 Fair to no purpose, artful to no end, 245
 Young without Lovers, old without a Friend;
 A Fop their Passion, but their Prize a Sot,
 Alive, ridiculous, and dead, forgot!

Ah! Friend! to dazzle let the Vain design;
 To raise the thought, and touch the Heart be thine!
 That Charm shall grow, while what fatigues the
 Ring, 251
 Flaunts and goes down, an unregarded thing:
 So when the Sun's broad beam has tir'd the sight,
 All mild ascends the Moon's more sober light,

NOTES.

VER. 249. Advice for their true Interest. P.

VER. 253. *So when the Sun's broad beam, &c.*] One of the great beauties observable in the Poet's management of his *similitudes*, is the ceremonious preparation he makes for them, in gradually raising the imagery of them in

Serene in Virgin Modesty she shines, 255
 And unobserv'd the glaring Orb declines.
 Oh! blest with Temper, whose unclouded ray
 Can make to-morrow chearful as to-day:
 She, who can love a Sister's charms, or hear
 Sighs for a Daughter with unwounded ear; 260
 She who ne'er answers till a Husband cools,
 Or, if she rules him, never shews she rules;
 Charms by accepting, by submitting ways,
 Yet has her humour most, when she obeys;
 Let Fops or Fortune fly which way they will; 265
 Disdains all loss of Tickets, or Codille;
 Spleen, Vapours, or Small-pox, above them all,
 And Mistress of herself, tho' China fall.

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the lines preceding, by the use of terms taken from the subject of them:

- “ while what *fatigues* the Ring.
 “ *Flaunts* and goes down, an unregarded thing.
 “ So when the *Sun*, &c.

And the civil dismissal he gives them by the continuance of the same terms, as in the following lines,

“ Oh! blest with temper, whose *unclouded ray*, &c.
 whereby the traces of the imagery gradually decay, and give place to others, and the reader is never offended with the sudden or abrupt disappearance of it. Another instance of the same kind we have in the beginning of this epistle:

- “ Chuse a firm *cloud* before it fall, and in it
 “ Catch, ere she *change*, the *Cynthia* of this minute.
 “ Rusa, whose eye quick-glancing o'er the Park,
 “ *Attracts* each light gay *Meteor* of a *Spark*, &c.

And yet, believe me, good as well as ill,
 Woman's at best a Contradiction still. 270
 Heav'n, when it strives to polish all it can
 Its last best work, but forms a softer Man;
 Picks from each sex, to make the Fav'rite blest,
 Your love of Pleasure, our desire of Rest:
 Blends, in exception to all general rules, 275
 Your taste of Follies, with our Scorn of Fools:
 Reserve with Frankness, Art with Truth ally'd,
 Courage with Softness, Modesty with Pride;
 Fix'd Principles, with Fancy ever new;
 Shakes all together, and produces—You. 280
 Be this a Woman's Fame: with this unblest,
 Toasts live a scorn, and Queens may die a jest.
 This Phœbus promis'd (I forget the year)
 When those blue eyes first open'd on the sphere;
 Ascendant Phœbus watch'd that hour with care, 285
 Averted half your Parent's simple Pray'r;

NOTES.

VER. 269. The picture of an estimable woman, with the best kind of contrarieties, created out of the Poet's imagination: who therefore feigned those circumstances of a husband, a daughter, and *love for a sister*, to prevent her being mistaken for any of his acquaintance. And having thus made his *Woman*, he did, as the ancient Poets were wont, when they had made their *Muse*, invoke, and address his poem to, her.

VER. 285, &c. *Ascendant Phœbus watch'd that hour with care,
 Averted half your Parent's simple Pray'r;
 And gave you Beauty, but deny'd the Pelf]*

The Poet concludes his epistle with a fine *Moral*, which

And gave you Beauty, but deny'd the Pelf
That buys your sex a Tyrant o'er itself.
The gen'rous God, who Wit and Gold refines,
And ripens Spirits as he ripens Mines,
Kept Dross for Duchesses, the world shall know it,
To you gave Sense, Good-humour, and a Poet.

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deserves the serious attention of the public: It is this, that all the extravagancies of these *vicious* characters here described, are much inflamed by a wrong education, hinted at in ver. 203; and that even the *best* are rather secured by a *good natural*, than by the prudence and providence of parents; which observation is conveyed under the sublime classical machinery of Phœbus in the ascendant, watching the natal hour of his favourite, and averting the ill effects of her parents mistaken fondness: For Phœbus, as the God of wit, confers genius; and, as one of the astronomical influences, defeats the adventitious bias of education.

In conclusion, the great Moral from both these epistles together is, that the two rarest things in all nature are a DISINTERESTED MAN, and a REASONABLE WOMAN.



*What brought S.^r Visto's ill-got wealth to waste.
Some Daemon whisper'd, Visto! have a Taste.*

Epist. on Taste.

MORAL ESSAYS.

EPISTLE III.

TO ALLEN LORD BATHURST.

ARGUMENT.

Of the Use of RICHES.

*T*HAT it is known to few, most falling into one of the extremes, Avarice or Profusion, & 1, &c. The Point discuss'd, whether the invention of Money has been more commodious, or pernicious to Mankind, & 21 to 77. That Riches, either to the Avaricious or the Prodigal, cannot afford Happiness, scarcely Necessaries, & 89 to 160. That Avarice is an absolute Frenzy, without an End or Purpose, & 113, &c. 152. Conjectures about the Motives of Avaricious men, & 121 to 153. That the conduct of men, with respect to Riches, can only be accounted for by the ORDER OF PROVIDENCE, which works the general Good out of

Extremes, and brings all to its great End by perpetual Revolutions, § 161 to 178. How a Miser acts upon Principles which appear to him reasonable, § 179. How a Prodigal does the same, § 199. The due Medium, and true use of Riches, § 219. The Man of Rofs, § 250. The fate of the Profuse and the Covetous, in two examples; both miserable in Life and in Death, § 300, &c. The Story of Sir Balaam, § 339 to the end.

E P I S T L E III.

P. **W**H O shall decide, when Doctors disagree,
 And soundest Casuists doubt, like you and me?
 You hold the word, from Jove to Momus giv'n,
 That Man was made the standing jest of Heav'n;

COMMENTARY.

EPISTLE III.] This epistle was written after a violent outcry against our Author, on a supposition that he had ridiculed a worthy nobleman merely for his wrong taste. He justified himself upon that article in a letter to the Earl of Burlington; at the end of which are these words: " I
 " have learnt that there are some who would rather be
 " wicked than ridiculous; and therefore it may be safer
 " to attack vices than follies. I will therefore leave my
 " betters in the quiet possession of their idols, their groves,
 " and their high places, and change my subject from their
 " pride to their meanness, from their vanities to their mi-
 " series; and as the only certain way to avoid miscon-
 " structions, to lessen offence, and not to multiply ill-na-
 " tured applications, I may probably, in my next, make
 " use of real names instead of fictitious ones." P.

VER. 1. *Who shall decide, &c.*] The address of the *intro-
 duction* (from ver. 1 to 21.) is remarkable: The Poet re-
 presents himself, and the noble Lord, his friend, as in a

NOTES.

VER. 3. *Momus giv'n,*] Amongst the earliest abuses of reason, one of the first was to cavil at the ways of Providence. But as, in those times, every vice as well as virtue, had its Patron-God, Momus came to be at the head of the old *Free-thinkers*. Him, the Mythologists very in-

And Gold but sent to keep the fools in play, 5
For some to heap, and some to throw away.

But I, who think more highly of our kind,
(And surely, Heav'n and I are of a mind)

C O M M E N T A R Y.

Free conversation, philosophizing on the *final cause of Riches*; and it proceeds by way of dialogue, which most writers have employed to hide the want of method; our Author uses it only to soften and enliven the dryness and severity of it. *You* (says the Poet)

—" hold the word from Jove to Momus giv'n, —

" But I, who think more highly of our kind, —

" Opine that Nature, &c.

As much as to say, " You, my Lord, hold the subject we
" are upon, as fit only for SATIRE; I, on the contrary,
" esteem it a case of Philosophy, and profound ETHICS:
" But as we both agree in the main *Principle*, that *Riches*
" *were not given for the reward of Virtue, but for very dif-*
" *ferent purposes* (See *Essay on Man*, Ep. iv.) let us com-
" promise the matter, and consider the subject jointly,
" both under your idea and mine, *i. e.* *Satyrical* and *Phi-*
" *losophically.*" — And this, in fact, we shall find to be the
true character of this poem, which is a *Species* peculiar to
itself; and partaking equally of the nature of his *Ethic*
Epistles and of his *Satires*, just as the best pieces of *Lucian*
arose from a combination of the Dialogues of *Plato*, and
the Scenes of *Aristophanes*. This it will be necessary to
carry with us, if we would see either the *wit* or the *rea-*
soning of this epistle in their true light.

N O T E S.

geniously made the Son of *Sleep* and *Night*; and so, conse-
quently, half-brother to *Dulness*. But having been much
employed, in after ages, by the *greek* Satyrists, he came,
at last, to pass for a *Wit*: and under this Idea, he is to be
considered in the place before us.

Opine, that Nature, as in duty bound,
 Deep hid the shining mischief under ground: 10
 But when by Man's audacious labour won,
 Flam'd forth this rival to its Sire, the Sun,
 Then careful Heav'n supply'd two sorts of Men,
 To squander These, and Those to hide agen.

Like Doctors thus, when much dispute has past, 15
 We find our tenets just the same at last.
 Both fairly owning, Riches, in effect,
 No grace of Heav'n or token of th' Elect;
 Giv'n to the Fool, the Mad, the Vain, the Evil,
 To Ward, to Waters, Chartres, and the Devil, 20

NOTES.

VER. 9. *Opine,*] A term sacred to controversy and high debate.

VER. ib.—*that Nature, as in duty bound,*] This, though ludicrously, is yet exactly, expressed; to shew, that, by *nature*, the Poet meant, not the God of nature, but the instrument and substitute of his providence.

VER. 12. *Flam'd forth this rival to its Sire, the Sun,*] The rival of its Sire in its brightness, and in its power of drawing mankind into error and delusion; the two first idols of the world, *natural* and *moral*, being the *Sun* and *Gold*.

VER. 20. JOHN WARD of Hackney, Esq; Member of Parliament, being prosecuted by the Dukes of Buckingham, and convicted of Forgery, was first expelled the House, and then stood on the Pillory on the 17th of March 1727. He was suspected of joining in a conveyance with Sir John Blunt, to secrete fifty thousand pounds of that Director's Estate, forfeited to the South-Sea company by Act of Parliament. The Company recovered the fifty thousand pounds against Ward; but he set up prior con-

B. What Nature wants, commodious Gold bestows,
'Tis thus we eat the bread another sows.

C O M M E N T A R Y.

VER. 21. *What Nature wants, &c.*] Having thus settled the terms of the *debate*, before he comes to the *main question*, the *Use of riches*, it was necessary to discuss a *previous* one, whether indeed they be, upon the whole, *useful to mankind or not*; (which he does from ver. 20 to 77.) It is commonly observed, says he (from ver. 21 to 35.) *That gold most commodiously supplies the wants of Nature*: "Let us first consider the proposition in *general*, both in matter

N O T E S.

veyances of his real estate to his brother and son, and concealed all his personal, which was computed to be one hundred and fifty thousand pounds. These conveyances being also set aside by a bill in Chancery, Ward was imprisoned, and hazarded the forfeiture of his life, by not giving in his effects till the last day, which was that of his examination. During his confinement, his amusement was to give poison to dogs and cats, and see them expire by slower or quicker torments. To sum up the *worth* of this gentleman, at the several æra's of his life; At his standing in the Pillory, he was *worth above two hundred thousand pounds*; at his commitment to Prison, he was *worth one hundred and fifty thousand*; but has been since so far diminished in his reputation, as to be thought a *worse man* by *fifty or sixty thousand*. P.

FR. CHARTRES, a man infamous for all manner of vices. When he was an ensign in the army, he was drummed out of the regiment for a cheat; he was next banished Brussels, and drummed out of Ghent on the same account. After a hundred tricks at the gaming-tables, he took to lending of money at exorbitant interest and on great penalties, accumulating premium, interest, and capital into a new capital, and seizing to a minute when the payments became due; in a word, by a constant attention to the

P. But how unequal it bestows, observe,
'Tis thus we riot, while, who sow it, starve:

COMMENTARY.

“ and expression; 1. As it regards the *supply*; and this
 “ we shall find to be very *unequal*: 2. As it regards the
 “ *wants*; and these, we shall see, are very *ambiguous*; un-
 “ der that term, all our fantastic and imaginary, as well
 “ as real wants being comprized. Hitherto the use is
 “ not very apparent. Let us in the second place, there-
 “ fore, consider the proposition in *particular*, or how Gold
 “ supplies the wants of nature both in private and public

NOTES.

vices, wants, and follies of mankind, he acquired an immense fortune, His house was a perpetual Bawdy-house. He was twice condemned for rapes, and pardoned; but the last time not without imprisonment in Newgate, and large confiscations. He died in Scotland in 1731, aged 62. The populace at his funeral raised a great riot, almost tore the body out of the coffin, and cast dead dogs, &c. into the grave along with it. The following Epitaph contains his character very justly drawn by Dr. Arbuthnot:

HERE continueth to rot
 The Body of FRANCIS CHARTRES,
 Who, with an INFLEXIBLE CONSTANCY,
 and INIMITABLE UNIFORMITY of Life,
 PERSISTED,
 In spite of AGE and INFIRMITIES,
 In the Practice of EVERY HUMAN VICE;
 Excepting PRODIGALITY and HYPOCRISY:
 His insatiable AVARICE exempted him from the first,
 His matchless IMPUDENCE from the second.
 Nor was he more singular
 in the undeviating *Pravity* of his *Manners*,
 Than successful
 in *Accumulating* WEALTH;

What Nature wants (a phrase I much distrust) 25
 Extends to Luxury, extends to Lust:

C O M M E N T A R Y.

“ life: 1. As to *private*; it aids us, indeed, to support
 “ life; but, at the same time, it hires the assassin. 2. As
 “ to *Society*; it may procure friendships and extend trade;
 “ but it allures robbers, and corrupts our acquaintance.
 “ 3. As to *Government*; it pays the guards necessary for
 “ the support of public liberty; but it may, with the
 “ same ease, bribe a Senate to overturn it.”

The matter, therefore, being thus problematical, the Poet, instead of formally balancing between the good and

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For, without TRADE or PROFESSION,
 Without TRUST of PUBLIC MONEY,
 And without BRIBE-WORTHY Service,
 He acquired, or more properly created,
 A MINISTERIAL ESTATE.

He was the only Person of his Time,
 Who could CHEAT without the Mask of HONESTY,
 Retain his Primeval MEANNESS

When possessed of TEN THOUSAND a Year,
 And having daily deserved the GIBBET for what he *did*,
 Was at last condemned to it for what he *could* not do.

Oh indignant Reader!

Think not his Life useless to Mankind!

PROVIDENCE connived at his execrable Designs,
 To give to after-ages

A conspicuous PROOF and EXAMPLE,
 Of how small Estimation is EXORBITANT WEALTH
 in the Sight of G O D,
 By his bestowing it on the most UNWORTHY OF ALL
 M O R T A L S.

This Gentleman was worth seven thousand pounds a year
 estate in Land, and about one hundred thousand in Money.

P.

Useful, I grant, it serves what life requires,
But dreadful too, the dark Assassin hires:

COMMENTARY.

ill, chuses to leave this *previous Question* undetermined (as Tacitus had done before him; where, speaking of the ancient *Germans*, he says, *Argentum et aurum propitii aut irati Dii negaverint dubito*;) and falls at once upon what he esteems the principal of these abuses, *public Corruption*.

For having in the last instance, of the Use of riches in Government, spoken of *venal Senates*, he goes on to lament the mischief, as desperate and remediless; Gold, by its power to corrupt with *Secrecy*, defeating all the efforts of public spirit, whether exerted in the courage of Heroes, or in the wisdom of Patriots.

'Tis true indeed (continues the Poet from ver. 34 to 49.) the very weight of the bribery has sometimes detected the corruption:

NOTES.

Mr. WATERS, the third of these worthies, was a man no way resembling the former in his military, but extremely so in his civil capacity; his great fortune having been raised by the like diligent attendance on the necessities of others. But this gentleman's history must be deferred till his death, when his *worth* may be known more certainly. P.

VER. 20.—*Chartres and the Devil.*] Alluding to the vulgar opinion, that all mines of metal and subterraneous treasures are in the guard of the Devil: which seems to have taken its rise from the pagan fable of Plutus the God of Riches.

VER. 21. *What Nature wants commodious Gold bestows,*] The epithet *commodious* gives us the very proper idea of a *Bawd* or *Pander*; and this thought produced the two following lines, which were in all the former editions, but, for their bad reasoning, omitted,

And if we count amongst the needs of life
Another's Toil, why not another's Wife;

B. Trade it may help, Society extend.

P. But lures the Pyrate, and corrupts the Friend. 30

B. It raises Armies in a Nation's aid.

P. But bribes a Senate, and the Land's betray'd.

In vain may Heroes fight, and Patriots rave ;

If secret Gold sap on from knave to knave.

COMMENTARY.

“ From the crack'd bag the dropping Guinea spoke, &c. But this inconvenience was soon repaired, by the invention of *paper credit*: whose dreadful effects on public liberty he describes in all the colouring of his poetry, heightened by the warmest concern for virtue ; which now makes him willing to give up, as it were, the *previous question*, in a passionate wish (from ver. 48 to 59.) for the return of that incumbrance attendant on public corruption, before the so *common* use of money.

And pleased with this flattering idea, he goes on (from ver. 58 to 77.) to shew the other advantages which would accrue from riches, only *in kind* ; these are, that neither

NOTES.

VER. 33.—*and Patriots rave ;*] The character of modern patriots was, in the opinion of our Poet, very equivocal ; as the name was undistinguishingly bestowed on every one who was in opposition to the court ; of this he gives a hint in ver. 139. of this Epistle. And agreeable to these sentiments is the equivocal turn of his expression here,

“ In vain—may Patriots rave ;

which they may do either in earnest or in jest ; and, in the opinion of *Sempronius* in the Play, nothing is better adapted to their pretences.

VER. 34. *If secret Gold sap on from knave to knave.*] The expression is fine, and gives us the image of a Place invested ; where the approaches are made by communica-

Once, we confess, beneath the Patriot's cloak, 35
 From the crack'd bag the dropping Guinea spoke,
 And gingling down the back-stairs, told the crew,
 "Old Cato is as great a Rogue as you."
 Blest paper-credit! last and best supply!
 That lends Corruption lighter wings to fly! 40
 Gold imp'd by thee, can compass hardest things,
 Can pocket States, can fetch or carry Kings;

COMMENTARY.

Avarice could contrive to hoard, nor *Prodigality* to lavish, in so mad and boundless a manner as they do at present. Here he shews particularly, in a fine ironical description of the embarras on *Gaming*, how effectually it would eradicate that execrable practice.

But this whole *Digression* (from ver. 34 to 77.) has another very uncommon beauty; for, at the same time that it arises naturally from the *last* consideration, in the debate of the *previous question*, it artfully denounces, in our entrance on the *main question*, the principal topics intended to be employed for the dilucidation of it; namely AVARICE, PROFUSION, and PUBLIC CORRUPTION.

NOTES.

tions, which support one another: just as the connexions amongst knaves, after they have been taken in by a state-engineer, serve to screen and encourage each other's private corruptions.

VER. 35.—*beneath the Patriot's cloak,*] This is a true story, which happened in the reign of William III, to an unsuspected old Patriot, who coming out at the back-door from having been closetted by the King, where he had received a large bag of Guineas, the bursting of the bag discovered his business there. P.

VER. 42.—*fetch or carry Kings;*] In our author's time, many Princes had been sent about the world, and great

A single leaf shall waft an Army o'er,
 Or ship off Senates to a distant Shore;
 A leaf, like Sibyl's, scatter to and fro 45
 Our fates and fortunes, as the winds shall blow:
 Pregnant with thousands flits the Scrap unseen,
 And silent sells a King, or buys a Queen.

Oh! that such bulky Bribes as all might see,
 Still, as of old, incumber'd Villainy! 50
 Could France or Rome divert our brave designs,
 With all their brandies or with all their wines?
 What could they more than Knights and Squires con-
 found,
 Or water all the Quorum ten miles round?

VARIATIONS.

After ver. 50. in the MS.

To break a trust were Peter brib'd with wine,
 Peter! 'twould pose as wise a head as thine.

NOTES.

changes of Kings projected in Europe. The partition-treaty had disposed of Spain; France had set up a King for England, who was sent to Scotland, and back again; King Stanislaus was sent to Poland, and back again; the Duke of Anjou was sent to Spain, and Don Carlos to Italy. P.

VER. 44. *Or ship off Senates to some distant Shore;*] Alludes to several Ministers, Counsellors, and Patriots banished in our times to Siberia, and to that MORE GLORIOUS FATE of the PARLIAMENT of PARIS, banished to Pontoise in the year 1720. P.

VER. 47. *Pregnant with thousands flits the Scrap unseen,*] The imagery is very sublime, and alludes to the course

A statesman's slumbers how this speech would spoil!

“ Sir, Spain has sent a thousand jars of oil; 56

“ Huge bales of British cloth blockade the door;

“ A hundred oxen at your levee roar.”

Poor Avarice one torment more would find;

Nor could Profusion squander all in kind. 60

Astride his cheese Sir Morgan might we meet;

And Worldly crying coals from street to street,

Whom with a wig so wild, and mien so maz'd,

Pity mistakes for some poor tradesman craz'd.

Had Colepepper's whole wealth been hops and hogs,

Could he himself have sent it to the dogs? 66

N O T E S.

of a destroying pestilence. The Psalmist, in his expression of *the Pestilence that walketh in darkness*, supplied him with the grandeur of his idea.

VER. 63. Some Misers of great wealth, proprietors of the coal-mines, had entered at this time into an Association to keep up coals to an extravagant price, whereby the poor were reduced almost to starve, till one of them taking the advantage of underselling the rest, defeated the design. One of these Misers was *worth ten thousand*, another *seven thousand* a year. P.

VER. 65. *Colepepper*,] Sir WILLIAM COLEPEPPER, Bart. a Person of an ancient family, and ample fortune, without one other quality of a Gentleman, who, after ruining himself at the Gaming-table, pass the rest of his days in sitting there to see the ruin of others; preferring to subsist upon borrowing and begging, rather than to enter into any reputable method of life, and refusing a Post in the army which was offered him. P.

His Grace will game: to White's a Bull be led,
 With spurning heels and with a butting head.
 To White's be carry'd, as to ancient games,
 Fair Coursers, Vases, and alluring Dames, 70
 Shall then Uxorio, if the stakes he sweep,
 Bear home six Whores, and make his Lady weep?
 Or soft Adonis, so perfum'd and fine,
 Drive to St. James's a whole herd of swine?
 Oh filthy check on all industrious skill, 75
 To spoil the nation's last great trade, Quadrille!
 Since then, my Lord, on such a World we fall,
 What say you? B. Say? Why take it, Gold and all.

VARIATIONS.

VER. 77. *Since then, &c.*] In the former Ed.

Well then, since with the world we stand or fall,
 Come take it as we find it, Gold and all.

COMMENTARY.

VER. 77. *Since then, my Lord, on such a World, &c.*] Having thus ironically described the incumbrance which the want of money would occasion to all criminal excesses by the abuse of Riches, particularly to *Gaming*, which being now become of public concern, he affects much regard to:

“ Oh filthy check on all industrious skill,

“ To spoil the Nation's last great trade, Quadrille!

he concludes the *previous question* without deciding it, in the same *ironical* manner,

“ Since then, my Lord, on such a World we fall:

“ What say you? Say? Why take it, Gold and all.

That is, since for these great purposes we must have *Money*, let us now *seriously* inquire into its *true use*.

P. What Riches give us let us then enquire:

Meat, Fire, and Cloaths, B. What more? P. Meat,
Cloaths, and Fire. 80

Is this too little? would you more than live:

Alas! 'tis more than Turner finds they give.

COMMENTARY.

VER. 79. *What Riches give us, &c.*] He examines therefore in the *first* place (from ver. 78 to 97.) I. *Of what use Riches are to ourselves:*

“ What Riches give us let us then enquire:

“ Meat, Fire, and Cloaths. What more? Meat, Cloaths,
and Fire.

The mere *turn* of the expression, without further reasoning, shews that all the infinite ways of spending *on ourselves*, contrived in the insolence of wealth, by those who would *more than live*, are only these *three* things diversified throughout every wearied mode of luxury and wantonness.

Yet as little as this is, (adds the Poet from ver. 81 to 85.) it is only to be had by the *moderate use* of riches; *Avarice* and *Profusion* not allowing the possessors of the most exorbitant wealth even this little:

“ Alas! 'tis more than *Turner* finds they give.

“ Alas! 'tis more than (all his visions past)

“ Unhappy *Wharton*, waking, found at last!

But what is it you would expect them to give? continues

NOTES.

VER. 82. *Turner*] One, who, being possessed of three hundred thousand pounds, laid down his Coach, because Interest was reduced from five to four *per cent.* and then put seventy thousand into the Charitable Corporation for better interest; which sum having lost, he took it so much to heart, that he kept his chamber ever after. It is thought

Alas ! 'tis more than (all his Visions past)

Unhappy Wharton, waking, found at last !

COMMENTARY.

the Poet (from ver. 84 to 91.) Would you have them capable of restoring those real blessings, which men have lost by their vices or their villainies ; or of satisfying those imaginary ones, which they have gotten by their irregular appetites and passions ? *These*, sure, the bad or foolish man cannot have the face to demand ; and *those*, by the wise provision of Nature, riches are incapable of giving, if he had.

But now admit, pursues our Author (from ver. 90 to 97.) that wealth might, in some cases, alleviate the unmerited miseries of life, by procuring medicines both for the mind and body ; yet it is not to be thought it should operate like a charm, while only worn about one : Yet this, these *poor men of pelf* expect from it ; while *Avarice* on the one hand, with-holds them from giving at all, even to the Doctor in extremity ; or *Vanity* diverts the donation from a Friend in life, to the Endowment of a *Cat* or *College* at their death. It is true, *Riches* might give the greatest of all blessings, a *virtuous consciousness* of our having employed them as becomes the *substitutes of Providence*,

“ To ease or emulate the care of Heaven, ver. 230.
in acts of BENEFICENCE and CHARITY ; and this use is next to be considered.

NOTES.

he would not have outlived it, but that he was heir to another considerable estate, which he daily expected, and that by this course of life he saved both cloaths and all other expences. P.

VER. 84. *Unhappy Wharton*,] A Nobleman of great qualities, but as unfortunate in the application of them, as if they had been vices and follies. See his Character in the first Epistle. P.

What can they give? to dying Hopkins, Heirs; 85
 To Chartres, Vigour; Japhet, Nose and Ears?
 Can they, in gems bid pallid Hippia glow,
 In Fulvia's buckle ease the throbs below:
 Or heal, old Narses, thy obscurer ail,
 With all th' embroid'ry plaister'd at thy tail? 90
 They might (were Harpax not too wise to spend)
 Give Harpax self the blessing of a Friend;
 Or find some Doctor that would save the life
 Of wretched Shylock, spite of Shylock's Wife:

NOTES.

VER. 85. *Hopkins,*] A Citizen, whose rapacity obtained him the name of *Vulture Hopkins*. He lived worthless, but died *worth three hundred thousand pounds*, which he would give to no person living, but left it so as not to be inherited till after the second generation. His counsel representing to him how many years it must be, before this could take effect, and that his money could only lie at interest all that time, he expressed great joy thereat, and said, "They would then be as long in spending, as he had been in getting it." But the Chancery afterwards set aside the will, and gave it to the heir at law. P.

VER. 86. *Japhet, Nose and Ears?*] JAPHET CROOK, alias Sir *Peter Stranger*, was punished with the loss of those parts, for having forged a conveyance of an estate to himself, upon which he took up several thousand pounds. He was at the same time sued in Chancery for having fraudulently obtained a Will, by which he possessed another considerable Estate, in wrong of the brother of the deceased. By these means he was *worth* a great sum, which (in reward for the small loss of his ears) he enjoyed in prison till his death, and quietly left to his executor. P.

But thousands die, without or this or that, 95

Die, and endow a College, or a Cat.

To some, indeed, Heav'n grants the happier fate,

T' enrich a Bastard, or a Son they hate.

Perhaps you think the poor might have their part.

Bond damns the Poor, and hates them from his heart :

COMMENTARY.

VER. 97. *To some indeed, &c.*] For now the Poet comes, in the second place, to examine, II. *Of what use Riches are to others*; which he teaches, as is his way throughout this poem, by the *abuse* that stands opposed to it: Thus he shews (from ver. 96 to 107.) that with regard to acts of *beneficence*, the utmost Heaven will grant to those who so greatly abuse its blessings, is either to enrich some favourite *Bastard*, and so perpetuate their vice and infamy; or else, contrary to their intent, a legitimate *Son they hated*, and so expose to public scorn and ridicule, the defeat of their unnatural cruelty. But with regard to acts of charity, they are given up to so reprobate a sense, as to believe they are then seconding the designs of Heaven, when they pursue the indigent with imprecations, or leave them in the midst of their distresses unrelieved, as the common enemies of God and Man.

NOTES.

VER. 96. *Die, and endow a College, or a Cat.*] A famous Duchess of R. in her last Will left considerable legacies and annuities to her Cats. P.

VER. 100. *Bond damns the Poor, &c.*] This epistle was written in the year 1730, when a corporation was established to lend money to the poor upon pledges, by the name of the *Charitable Corporation*; but the whole was turned only to an iniquitous method of enriching particular people, to the ruin of such numbers, that it became a parliamentary concern to endeavour the relief of those

The grave Sir Gilbert holds it for it a rule 101

That ev'ry man in want is knave or fool:

“ God cannot love (says Blunt, with tearless eyes)

“ The wretch he starves”—and piously denies:

But the good Bishop with a meeker air, 105

Admits, and leaves them, Providence's care.

NOTES.

unhappy sufferers, and three of the managers, who were members of the house, were expelled. By the report of the Committee, appointed to enquire into that iniquitous affair, it appears, that when it was objected to the intended removal of the office, that the Poor, for whose use it was erected, would be hurt by it, Bond, one of the Directors, replied, *Damn the Poor*. That “ God hates the poor,” and, “ That every man in want is knave or fool,” &c. were the genuine apothegms of some of the Persons here mentioned.

P.

VER. 102. *That ev'ry man in want, is knave or fool:*] None are more subject to be deluded by this vain mistake, *that prudence does all in human affairs*, than those who have been most befriended by fortune. The reason is, that, in this situation prudence has never been brought to the test, nor vanity ever mortified. So that Prudence will be always ready to take to herself what fortune encourages; Vanity to call her due. And then want of success will, of course, be imputed to want of wit.

VER. 105. *But the good Bishop, &c.*] In this place, and in the first Dialogue of 1738, the Poet had named a very worthy Person of condition, who for a course of many years had shined in public stations much to the advantage and honour of his country. But being at once oppressed by popular prejudice and a public censure, it was no wonder, the Poet, to whom he was personally a stranger, should think hardly of him. I had the honour to be well known to that truly illustrious Person, and to be greatly obliged

Yet to be just to these poor men of pelf,
Each does but hate his neighbour as himself:

C O M M E N T A R Y.

VER. 107. *Yet to be just, &c.*] Having thus shewn the *true use* of riches in a description of the *abuse*; and how that use is perpetually defeated by *profusion* and *avarice*; it was natural to enquire into the spring and original of these vices; as the mischiefs they occasion, must be well understood, before they can be corrected. The disposition of his matter, therefore, now calls upon him to come to the *Philosophy* of his subject: And he examines particularly into the *motives* of *Avarice*: But what is observable, he, all along, satyrically intermixes with the *real motives*, several *imaginary*; and those as wild as imagination could conceive. This, which at first sight might seem to vitiate the purpose of his philosophical inquiry, is found, when duly considered, to have the highest art of design. His business, the reader sees, was to prove that the real motives had the utmost extravagancy: Nothing could more conduce to this end, than the setting them by, and comparing them with, the most whimsical, the fancy itself could invent; in which situation it was seen, that the real were full as wild as the fictitious. To give these images all the force they were capable of, he first describes (from ver. 118 to

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by him. From my intimate knowledge of his character, I was fully persuaded of his innocence, and that he was unwarily drawn in by a pack of infamous Cheats, to his great loss of fortune as well as reputation. At my request and information therefore, the Poet with much satisfaction retracted and struck out, in both places, his ill-grounded censure. I have since had the pleasure to understand, from the best authority, that my favourable sentiments of him have lately been fully justified in the course of some proceedings in the high Court of Chancery, the most unerring investigator of truth and falsehood.

Damn'd to the Mines, an equal fate betides
 The Slave that digs it, and the Slave that hides. 110
 B. Who suffer thus, mere Charity should own,
 Must act on motives pow'rful, tho' unknown.
 P. Some War, some Plague, or Famine they foresee,
 Some Revelation hid from you and me.
 Why Shylock wants a meal, the cause is found, 115
 He thinks a Loaf will rise to fifty pound.
 What made Directors cheat in South-sea year?
 To live on Ven'son when it fold so dear.

COMMENTARY.

123.) the real motive, and an imaginary one different from the real, in the *same person*: and then (from ver. 122 to 133.) an imaginary one, and a real, the very same with the imaginary, in *different persons*. This address the Poet himself hints at, ver. 155.

“ Less mad the wildest whimsey we can frame, &c.

Let me observe, that this has still a further beauty, arising from the nature of the poem, which (as we have shewn) is partly satyrical, and partly philosophical.—With regard to the particular beauties of this disposition, I shall only take notice of one; where the Poet introduces the fictitious motive of Blunt's avarice, by a wizard's prophecy:

“ At length Corruption, like a gen'ral flood
 “ (So long by watchful Ministers withstood)
 “ Shall deluge all; and *Av'rice* creeping on
 “ Spread like a low-born mist, and blot the Sun, &c.

NOTES.

VER. 118. *To live on Ven'son*] In the extravagance and luxury of the South-sea year, the price of a haunch of Venison was from three to five pounds. P.

Ask you why Phryne the whole Auction buys?

Phryne foresees a general Excise. 120

Why she and Sappho raise that monstrous sum?

Alas! they fear a man will cost a plum.

Wise Peter sees the World's respect for Gold,
And therefore hopes this Nation may be sold:

Glorious Ambition! Peter swell thy store, 125

And be what Rome's great Didius was before.

COMMENTARY.

“ See Britain sunk in lucre's sordid charms,

“ And France reveng'd on Anne's and Edward's arms!

For it was the Poet's purpose to shew, that the main and principal *abuse* of riches arises from Avarice.

NOTES.

VER. 120.—*general Excise.*] Many people about the year 1733, had a conceit that such a thing was intended, of which it is not improbable this lady might have some intimation. P.

VER. 123. *Wise Peter*] PETER WALTER, a person not only eminent in the wisdom of his profession, as a dextrous attorney, but allowed to be a good, if not a safe, conveyancer; extremely respected by the Nobility of this land, tho' free from all manner of luxury and ostentation: his Wealth was never seen, and his bounty never heard of, except to his own son, for whom he procured an employment of considerable profit, of which he gave him as much as was *necessary*. Therefore the taxing this gentleman with any Ambition, is certainly a great wrong to him. P.

VER. 126. *Rome's great Didius*] A Roman Lawyer, so rich as to purchase the Empire when it was set to sale upon the death of Pertinax. P.

The Crown of Poland, venal twice an age,
 To just three millions stinted modest Gage.
 But nobler scenes Maria's dreams unfold,
 Hereditary Realms, and worlds of Gold. 130
 Congenial souls! whose life one Av'rice joins,
 And one fate buries in th' Asturian Mines.

Much injur'd Blunt! why bears he Britain's hate?
 A wizard told him in these words our fate:

“ At length Corruption, like a gen’ral flood, 135
 “ So long by watchful Ministers withstood)

NOTES.

VER. 127. *The Crown of Poland, &c.*] The two persons here mentioned were of Quality, each of whom in the Mississippi despised to realize above *three hundred thousand pounds*; the Gentleman with a view to the purchase of the Crown of Poland, the lady on a vision of the like royal nature. They since retired into Spain, where they are still in search of gold in the mines of the Asturias. P.

VER. 133. *Much injur'd Blunt!*] Sir JOHN BLUNT, originally a scrivener, was one of the first projectors of the South-sea company, and afterwards one of the directors and chief managers of the famous scheme in 1720. He was also one of those who suffered most severely by the bill of pains and penalties on the said directors. He was a Dissenter of a most religious deportment, and professed to be a great believer. Whether he did really credit the prophecy here mentioned is not certain, but it was constantly in this very style he declaimed against the corruption and luxury of the age, the partiality of Parliaments, and the misery of party-spirit. He was particularly eloquent against *Avarice* in great and noble persons, of which he had indeed lived to see many miserable examples. He died in the year 1732. P.

“ Shall deluge all; and Av’rice creeping on,
 “ Spread like a low-born mist, and blot the Sun;
 “ Statesman and Patriot ply alike the stocks,
 “ Peerefs and Butler share alike the Box, 140
 “ And Judges job, and Bishops bite the town,
 “ And mighty Dukes pack cards for half a crown.
 “ See Britain sunk in lucre’s sordid charms,
 “ And France reveng’d of ANNE’s and EDWARD’s
 “ arms!

’Twas no Court-badge, great Scriv’ner! fir’d thy brain,
 Nor lordly Luxury, nor City Gain: 146

No, ’twas thy righteous end, aham’d to see
 Senates degen’rate, Patriots disagree,
 And nobly wishing Party-rage to cease,
 To buy both sides, and give thy Country peace. 150

“ All this is madness,” cries a sober sage:
 But who, my friend, has reason in his rage?

C O M M E N T A R Y.

VER. 151. “ *All this is madness,*” &c.] But now the Sage, who has confined himself to *books*, which prescribe the *government of the passions*; and never looked out upon the world, where he might see them let loose, and, like Milton’s devils, riding the air in whirlwind, cries out,

N O T E S.

VER. 137. ———— *Av’rice creeping on,*
Spread like a low-born mist, and blot the Sun;
 The similitude is extremely apposite, implying that this vice is of base and mean original; hatched and nursed up among Scriv’ners, Stock-jobbers, and Cits; and un-

“ The ruling Passion, be it what it will,
 “ The ruling Passion conquers Reason still.”
 Less mad the wildest whimsey we can frame, 155
 Than ev’n that Passion, if it has no Aim;

COMMENTARY.

All this is madness. True, replies the Poet (from ver. 151 to 177.) but this madness is a common one; and only to be prevented by a severe attention to the rule laid down in the *Essay*,

“ Reason still use, to reason still attend, *Ep.* ii. y 68.
 for amongst the generality of men, and without the greatest
 circumspection,

“ The *ruling passion*, be it what it will,
 “ The *ruling Passion*, conquers reason still.

But then (continues he) as senseless as this passion appears, by the sway of its over-bearing bias, it would be still more senseless had it no bias at all: you have seen us here intermix with the *real*, the most *fantastical* and extravagant that imagination could invent; yet even these are less extravagant than a *ruling Passion without a constant aim*. Would you know the reason? then listen to this important truth: “ ’Tis HEAVEN itself that gives the *ruling Pas-*
 “ *sion*, and thereby directs different men to different ends:
 “ But these being exerted through the ministry of NA-
 “ TURE (of whom the great *Bacon* truly observes, *modum*
 “ *tenere nescia est*, Aug. Scient. l. ii. c. 13.) they are very
 “ apt to run into extremes: To correct which, Heaven,

NOTES.

known, ’till of late, to the Nobles of this land: But now, in the fulness of time, she rears her head, and aspires to cover the most illustrious stations in her dark and pestilential shade. The Sun, and other luminaries of Heaven, signifying, in the high eastern style, the Grandees and Nobles of the earth.

SCRIBL.

For tho' such motives Folly you may call,
The Folly's greater to have none at all.

Hear then the truth: "'Tis Heav'n each Passion
" sends,

" And diff'rent men directs to diff'rent ends, 160

" Extremes in Nature equal good produce,

" Extremes in Man concur to gen'ral use."

Ask we what makes one keep, and one bestow?

That Pow'r who bids the Ocean ebb and flow,

Bids seed-time, harvest, equal course maintain, 165

Thro' reconcil'd extremes of drought and rain,

COMMENTARY.

" at the same time, added to the moderatrix *Reason*;
" not to take the *ruling Passion* out of the hands and mi-
" nistry of *Nature*, but to restrain and rectify its irregular
" impulses (See *Essay*, Ep. ii. ver. 151, & *seq.*) and what
" extremes, after this, remained uncorrected in the ad-
" ministration of this *weak Queen* (ver. 140. Ep. ii.) the
" divine artist himself has, in his heavenly skill and
" bounty, set to rights; by so ordering, that these of
" the *moral* world, like those of the *natural*, should, even

NOTES.

VER. 137. *This year a Reservoir, to keep and spare;*

The next, a Fountain, spouting thro' his Heir,]

Besides the obvious beauties of this fine similitude, it has one still more exquisite, tho' less observable; and this is, that it is taken from a circumstance in the most elegant part of improved life. For tho' in *Society*, the follies of hoarding and squandering may correct each other, and produce real advantage to the Whole; as Reservoirs and Fountains may be both useful and ornamental, amongst the other improvements of arts; yet in a *State of Nature*

Builds Life on Death, on Change Duration founds,
And gives th' eternal wheels to know their rounds.

Riches, like insects, when conceal'd they lie,
Wait but for wings, and in their season fly. 170

Who sees pale Mammon pine amidst his store,
Sees but a backward steward for the Poor;
This year a Reservoir, to keep and spare;
The next, a Fountain, spouting thro' his Heir,

COMMENTARY.

“ by the very means of their contrariety and diversity,
“ concur to defeat the malignity of one another.

“ Extremes in *Nature* equal good produce,

“ Extremes in *Man* concur to gen'ral use.

“ For as the various seasons of the year are supported
“ and sustained by the reconciled extremes of *Wet* and
“ *Dry, Cold* and *Heat*; so all the *orders* and *degrees* of civil
“ life are kept up by *Avarice* and *Profusion, Selfishness* and
“ *Vanity*. The Miser being but the Steward of the Pro-

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either kind of excess would be pernicious; because, in that State, the *quantity* of natural goods, unimproved by art, would not suffer, without great danger of want to the whole body, either an immoderate hoarding, or a lavish profusion. And therefore Providence has wisely ordered that, by there being no *fantastic* wants in that State, there should be no possible temptation to either. Which noble truth our Poet hints at in the beginning of the Epistle:

“ But *when* by Man's audacious labour won,

“ Flam'd forth this Rival to its Sire, the sun,

“ Then careful Heav'n supply'd two sorts of men,

“ To squander These, and Those to hide agen. § 11, &c.

In lavish streams to quench a Country's thirst, 175
 And men and dogs shall drink him till they burst,
 Old Cotta sham'd his fortune and his birth,
 Yet was not Cotta void of wit or worth:

C O M M E N T A R Y.

“ digal; and only so much the more backward as the
 “ other is precipitate: ”

“ This year a Reservoir to keep and spare;

“ The next a Fountain spouting thro' his heir.

VER. 177. *Old Cotta sham'd his fortune, &c.*] The Poet now proceeds to support the principles of his Philosophy by *examples*: but before we come to these, it will be necessary to look back upon the general œconomy of the poem.

In the first part, to ver. 109, the *use* and *abuse* of Riches are *satyrically* delivered in *precept*. From thence, to ver. 177, the causes of the abuse are *philosophically* enquired into: And from thence to the end, the *use* and *abuse* are *historically* illustrated by *examples*. Where we may observe, that the conclusion of the *first* part, concerning the Miser's cruelty to others, naturally introduces the *second*, by a satirical apology, which shews that he is full as cruel to himself: The explanation of this extraordinary phænomenon brings the Author into the *Philosophy* of his subject; and this ending in an observation of Avarice and Profusion's correcting and reconciling one another, as naturally introduces the *third*, which proves the truth of the observation from *fact*. And thus the *Philosophy* of his subject standing between his *Precepts* and *Examples*, gives strength and light to both, and receives it reflected back again from both.

He first gives us two examples (from ver. 176 to 219.) of these opposite *ruling Passions*, and (to see them in their full force) taken from subjects, as he tells us, *not void of wit or worth*; from such as could reason themselves (as

What tho' (the use of barb'rous spits forgot)
 His kitchen vy'd in coolness with his grot? 180
 His court with nettles, moats with cresses stor'd,
 With soups unbought and fallads bless'd his board?
 If Cotta liv'd on pulse, it was no more
 Than Bramins, Saints, and Sages did before;
 To cram the rich was prodigal expence, 185
 And who would take the Poor from Providence?
 Like some lone Chartreux stands the good old Hall,
 Silence without, and fasts within the wall;
 No rafter'd roofs with dance and tabor sound,
 No noontide bell invites the country round: 190
 Tenants with sighs the smoakless tow'rs survey,
 And turn th' unwilling steeds another way:
 Benighted wanderers, the forest o'er,
 Curs'd the sav'd candle, and unop'ning door;

COMMENTARY.

we see by ver. 183, & *seq.* and ver. 205, & *seq.*) into the whole length of each extreme: For the Poet had observed of the *ruling Passion* that

“ Wit, Spirit, Faculties, but make it worse;

“ Reason itself but gives it edge and pow'r.

Essay, Ep. ii. ver. 146.

Old *Cotta* and his *Son* afforded him the most happy illustration of his doctrine.

IMITATIONS.

VER. 182. *With soups unbought,*]

—dapibus menfas onerabat inemptis. VIRG. P.

While the gaunt mastiff growling at the gate, 195
Affrights the beggar whom he longs to eat.

Not so his Son, he mark'd this oversight,
And then mistook reverse of wrong for right.
(For what to shun will no great knowledge need,
But what to follow, is a task indeed.) 200
Yet sure, of qualities deserving praise,
More go to ruin Fortunes than to raise.

VARIATIONS.

VER. 200. Here I found two lines in the Poet's MS.

“ Yet sure, of qualities deserving praise,

“ More go to ruin fortunes than to raise.

which, as they seemed to be necessary to do justice to the fictitious Character going to be described, I advised him to insert in their place.

NOTES.

VER: 199. *For what to shun will no great knowledge need,
But what to follow, is a task indeed.*]

The Poet is here speaking only of the knowledge gained by *experience*. Now there are so many miserable examples of ill conduct, that no one, with his eyes open, can be at a loss to know *what to shun*; but, very inviting examples of a good conduct are extremely rare: Besides, the mischiefs of folly are eminent and obvious; but the fruits of prudence, remote and retired from common observation; and if seen at all, yet their dependance on their *causes* not being direct and immediate, they are not easily understood.

VER. 201, 202. *Yet sure, of qualities deserving praise,
More go to ruin fortunes than to raise.*]

This, tho' a true maxim, will, as I apprehended, never

What slaughter'd hecatombs, what floods of wine,
 Fill the capacious 'Squire, and deep Divine!
 Yet no mean motive this profusion draws, 205
 His oxen perish in his country's cause;
 'Tis GEORGE and LIBERTY that crowns the cup,
 And Zeal for that great House which eats him up.
 The Woods recede around the naked seat,
 The sylvans groan—no matter—for the Fleet: 210
 Next goes his Wool—to clothe our valiant bands,
 Last, for his Country's love, he sells his Lands.
 To town he comes, completes the nation's hope,
 And heads the bold Train-bands, and burns a Pope.
 And shall not Britain now regard his toils, 215
 Britain, that pays her Patriots with her Spoils?
 In vain at Court the Bankrupt pleads his cause,
 His thankless Country leaves him to her Laws.

VARIATIONS.

After ver. 218. in the MS.

Where one lean herring furnish'd Cotta's board,
 And nettles grew, fit porridge for their Lord;
 Where mad good-nature, bounty misapply'd,
 In lavish Curio blaz'd a-while and dy'd;
 There Providence once more shall shift the scene,
 And shewing H—Y, teach the golden mean.

NOTES.

make its fortune in the *City*: yet for all that, the Poet has fully approved it in the example of a character truly aimable for its beneficence, tho' carried to an extreme.

The Sense to value Riches, with the Art
 T' enjoy them, and the Virtue to impart, 220
 Not meanly, nor ambitiously pursu'd,
 Not sunk by sloth, nor rais'd by servitude;

C O M M E N T A R Y.

VER. 219. *The Sense to value Riches, &c.*] The Author having now largely exposed the ABUSE of Riches by *example*; not only the *Plan*, but the *Philosophy* of his Poem, required, that he should, in the same way, shew the USE likewise: He therefore (from ver. 218 to 249.) calls for an Example, in which may be found, against the PRODIGAL, the *Sense to value Riches*; against the VAIN, the *Art to enjoy them*; and against the AVARICIOUS, the *Virtue to impart them*, when acquired. This whole Art (he tells us) may be comprized in one great and general precept, which is this: "That the rich man should consider himself as the substitute of Providence, in this unequal distribution of things; as the person who is

To ease, or emulate, the care of Heav'n;

"To mend the faults of fortune, or to justify her graces." And thus the Poet slides naturally into the prosecution of his subject in an Example of the true use of Riches.

N O T E S.

VER. 219, 220. *The Sense to value Riches, with the Art, T' enjoy them, and the Virtue to impart.*]

The Sense to value Riches, is not, in the City-meaning, the sense in valuing them: for as Riches may be enjoyed without art, and imparted with virtue, so they may be valued without sense. That man therefore only shews he has the *sense to value Riches*, who keeps what he has acquired, in order to enjoy one part innocently and elegantly, in such measure and degree as his station may justify, (which the Poet calls the *Art of enjoying*) and to impart the remainder amongst objects of worth, or want well weighed; which is, indeed, the *Virtue of imparting*.

To balance Fortune by a just expence,
 Join with Oeconomy, Magnificence;
 With Splendor, Charity; with Plenty, Health; 225
 Oh teach us BATHURST! yet unspoil'd by wealth!
 That secret rare, between th' extremes to move
 Of mad Good-nature, and of mean Self-love.

B. To Worth or Want well-weigh'd, be Bounty
 giv'n,

And ease, or emulate, the care of Heav'n; 230
 (Whose measure full o'erflows on human race)
 Mend Fortune's fault, and justify her grace.
 Wealth in the gross is death, but life diffus'd;
 As poison heals, in just proportion us'd:
 In heaps, like Ambergrise, a stink it lies, 235
 But well-dispers'd, is Incense to the Skies.

P. Who starves by Nobles, or with Nobles eats?
 The Wretch that trusts them, and the Rogue that cheats.

VARIATIONS.

After ver. 226. in the MS.

That secret rare, with affluence hardly join'd,
 Which W—n lost, yet B—y ne'er could find;
 Still miss'd by Vice, and scarce by Virtue hit,
 By G——'s goodness, or by S——'s wit.

NOTES.

VER. 231, 232. *Whose measure full o'erflows on human race,
 Mend Fortune's fault, and justify her grace.*]

i. e. Such of the Rich whose full measure overflows on human race, repair the wrongs of Fortune done to the indigent, and at the same time, justify the favours she had bestowed upon themselves.

Is there a Lord, who knows a chearful noon
 Without a Fiddler, Flatt'rer, or Buffoon? 240
 Whose table, Wit, or modest Merit share,
 Un-elbow'd by a Gamester, Pimp, or Play'r?
 Who copies Your's, or OXFORD's better part,
 To ease th' oppress'd, and raise the sinking heart?
 Where-e'er he shines, oh Fortune, gild the scene,
 And Angels guard him in the golden Mean! 246
 There, English Bounty yet a-while may stand,
 And honour linger ere it leaves the land.

But all our praises why should Lords engross?
 Rise, honest Muse! and sing the MAN of Ross: 250

VARIATIONS.

After ver. 250. in the MS.

Trace humble worth beyond Sabrina's shore,
 Who sings not him, oh may he sing no more!

COMMENTARY.

VER. 249. *But all our praises why should Lords engross?*
Rise, honest Muse!]

This invidious expression of unwillingness that the Nobility should engross all the praise, is strongly ironical; their

NOTES.

VER. 243. OXFORD's *better part,*] Edward Harley, Earl of Oxford. The son of Robert, created Earl of Oxford, and Earl Mortimer by Queen Anne. This Nobleman died regretted by all men of letters, great numbers of whom had experienced his benefits. He left behind him one of the most noble Libraries in Europe. P.

VER. 250. *The MAN of Ross:]* The person here celebrated, who with a small Estate actually performed all

Pleas'd Vaga echoes thro' her winding bounds,
 And rapid Severn hoarse applause resounds.
 Who hung with woods yon mountain's sultry brow?
 From the dry rock who bade the waters flow?

COMMENTARY.

example having been given hitherto only to shew the *abuse* of Riches. But there is great justness of design as well as agreeableness of manner in the preference here given to the *Man of Ross*. The purpose of the Poet is to shew, that an immense fortune is not wanted for all the good that Riches are capable of doing; he therefore chuses such an instance, as proves, that a man with five hundred pounds a year could become a blessing to a whole country; and, consequently, that his precepts for the right use of money, are of more general service than a bad heart will give an indifferent head leave to conceive. This was a truth of the greatest importance to inculcate: He therefore (from ver. 249 to 297.) exalts the character of a very private man, one Mr. J. Kyrle, of Herefordshire: And in ending his description, struck as it were with admiration at a sublimity of *his own creating*, and warmed with sentiments of gratitude which he had raised in himself, in behalf of the public, he breaks out,

NOTES.

these good works, and whose true name was almost lost (partly by the title of the *Man of Ross* given him by way of eminence, and partly by being buried without so much as an inscription) was called Mr. John Kyrle. He died in the year 1724, aged 90, and lies interred in the chancel of the church of Ross in Herefordshire. P.

We must understand what is here said, of *actually performing*, to mean by the contributions which the *Man of Ross*, by his assiduity and interest, collected in his neighbourhood.

Not to the skies in useless columns tost, 255

Or in proud falls magnificently lost,

But clear and artless, pouring thro' the plain

Health to the sick, and solace to the swain.

Whose Cause-way parts the vale with shady rows?

Whose Seats the weary Traveller repose? 260

Who taught that heav'n-directed spire to rise!

"The MAN of Ross," each lisping babe replies.

Behold the Market-place with poor o'erspread!

The MAN of Ross divides the weekly bread:

COMMENTARY.

"And what? no monument, inscription, stone?

"His race, his form, his name almost unknown?

And then transported with indignation at a contrary object, he exclaims,

"When Hopkins dies, a thousand lights attend

"The wretch, who living sav'd a candle's end:

"Should'ring God's altar a vile image stands,

"Belies his features, nay, extends his hands.

I take notice of this description of the portentous vanity of a miserable Extortioner, chiefly for the use we shall now see he makes of it, in carrying on his subject.

NOTES.

VER. 255. *Not to the skies in useless columns tost,*

Or in proud falls magnificently lost,]

The intimation, in the first line, well ridicules the madness of fashionable Magnificence: these columns aspiring to prop the skies, in a very different sense from the *heav'n-directed spire*, in the verse that follows: As the expression, in the second line, exposes the meanness of this magnificence, in *falling proudly* to no purpose.

He feeds yon Alms-house, neat, but void of state,
 Where Age and Want sit smiling at the gate: 266
 Him portion'd maids, apprentic'd orphans blest,
 The young who labour, and the old who rest.
 Is any sick? the MAN of Ross relieves,
 Prescribes, attends, the med'cine makes, and gives.
 Is there a variance; enter but his door, 271
 Balk'd are the Courts, and contest is no more.
 Despairing Quacks with curses fled the place,
 And vile Attorneys, now an useless race.

B. Thrice happy man! enabled to pursue 275
 What all so wish, but want the pow'r to do!
 Oh say, what sums that gen'rous hand supply?
 What mines to swell that boundless charity?

P. Of Debts, and Taxes, Wife and Children clear,
 This man possest—five hundred pounds a year. 280
 Blush, Grandeur, blush! proud Courts, withdraw
 your blaze!

Ye little Stars! hide your diminish'd rays.

NOTES.

VER. 275. *Thrice happy man! enabled to pursue, &c.*
 ———— *boundless charity?*]

These four lines (which the Poet, with the highest propriety, puts into the mouth of his noble friend) very artfully introduces the two following, as, by the equivocal expression, they had raised our expectations to hear of millions; which prove, at last, to be only five hundred pounds a year. A circumstance, (as we see in the Comment) of great importance to be inculcated:

VER. 281. *Blush, Grandeur, blush! proud Courts, withdraw your blaze, &c.*] In this sublime apostrophe, *proud Courts*

B. And what? no monument, inscription, stone?
His race, his form, his name almost unknown?

P. Who builds a Church to God, and not to Fame,
Will never mark the marble with his Name: 286
Go, search it there, where to be born and die,
Of rich and poor, makes all the history;
Enough, that Virtue fill'd the space between;
Prov'd, by the ends of being, to have been. 290
When Hopkins dies, a thousand lights attend
The wretch, who living sav'd a candle's end:
Should'ring God's altar a vile image stands,
Belies his features, nay extends his hands;

V A R I A T I O N S.

VER. 287. thus in the MS.

The Register inrolls him with his Poor,
Tells he was born and dy'd, and tells no more.
Just as he ought, he fill'd the Space between;
Then stole to rest, unheeded and unseen.

N O T E S.

are not bid to *blush* because *outstript* in virtue; for no such contention is supposed: but for being *outshined* in their own proper pretensions to Splendor and Magnificence.

SCRIBL.

VER. 287. *Go, search it there,*] The parish-register.

VER. 293. *Should'ring God's altar a vile image stands,
Belies his features, nay extends his hands;*]

The description is inimitable. We see him *should'ring the altar* like one who impiously affected to draw off the reverence of God's worshipers, from the sacred table, upon himself: whose *Features* too the sculptor *had belied* by giving them the traces of humanity: And, what was a

That live-long wig which Gorgon's self might own,
Eternal buckle takes in Parian stone. 296

Behold what blessings Wealth to life can lend!
And see, what comfort it affords our end.

In the worst inn's worst room, with mat half-hung,
The floors of plaister, and the walls of dung, 300

COMMENTARY.

VER. 297. *Behold what blessings Wealth to life can lend!
And see, what comfort it affords our end.*]

In the first part of this Epistle the author had shewn, from *Reason*, that riches abused, afford no comfort either in life or death. In this part, where the same truth is taught by *examples*, he had, in the case of Cotta and his son, shewn, that they afford no comfort in *life*: the other member of the division remained to be spoken to,

“ Now see what comfort they afford our *end*.

And this he illustrates (from ver. 298 to 339.) in the unhappy deaths of the last Villers, Duke of Buckingham, and Sir J. Cutler; whose profusion and avarice he has beautifully contrasted. The miserable end of these two extraordinary persons naturally leads the Poet into this reflexion, truly humane, however ludicrously as well as ironically expressed,

“ Say, for such worth, are other worlds prepar'd?

“ Or are they both, in this, their own reward?

NOTES.

a still more impudent flattery, had insinuated, by *extending his hands*, as if that humanity had been some time or other, put into act.

VER. 296. *Eternal buckle takes in Parian stone.*] The Poet ridicules the wretched taste of carving large perriwigs on busto's, of which there are several vile examples in the tombs at Westminster and elsewhere. P.

On once a flock-bed, but repair'd with straw,
 With tape-ty'd curtains, never meant to draw,
 The George and Garter dangling from that bed
 Where tawdry yellow strove with dirty red,
 Great Villers lies—alas! how chang'd from him,
 That life of pleasure, and that soul of whim! 306
 Gallant and gay, in Cliveden's proud alcove,
 The bow'r of wanton Shrewsbury and love;

COMMENTARY.

And now, as if fully determined to resolve this doubtful question, he assumes the air and importance of a Professor ready address'd to plunge himself into the very depths of Theology:

“ A knotty point! to which we now proceed—
 when, on a sudden, the whole scene is changed,

“ But you are tir'd—I'll tell a tale—Agreed.

And thus, by the most easy transition, we are come to the concluding doctrine of his poem.

NOTES.

VER. 305. *Great Villers lies*—] This Lord, yet more famous for his vices than his misfortunes, having been possessed of about 50,000 *l.* a year, and passed thro' many of the highest posts in the kingdom, died in the year 1687, in a remote inn in Yorkshire, reduced to the utmost misery. P.

VER. 307. *Cliveden*] A delightful palace, on the banks of the Thames, built by the D. of Buckingham. P.

VER. 308. *Shrewsbury*] The Countess of Shrewsbury, a woman abandoned to gallantries. The Earl her husband was killed by the Duke of Buckingham in a duel; and it has been said, that during the combat she held the Duke's horses in the habit of a page. P.

Or just as gay, at Council, in a ring
 Of mimick'd Statesmen, and their merry King. 310
 No Wit to flatter, left of all his store!
 No Fool to laugh at, which he valu'd more.
 There, Victor of his health, of fortune, friends,
 And fame; this lord of useless thousands ends.

His Grace's fate sage Cutler could foresee, 315
 And well (he thought) advis'd him, "Live like me."
 As well, his Grace reply'd, "Like you, Sir John?"
 "That I can do, when all I have is gone."
 Resolve me, Reason, which of these is worse,
 Want with a full, or with an empty purse? 320

NOTES.

VER. 312. *No Fool to laugh at, which he valued more.*]
 That is, he liked disguised flattery better than the more direct and open. And no wonder a man of wit should have this taste. For the taking pleasure in fools, for the sake of *laughing at them*, is nothing else but the complaisance of *flattering ourselves*, by an advantageous comparison which the mind makes between itself and the object laughed at. Hence too we may see the reason of men's preferring this to every other kind of Flattery. For we are always inclined to think that work best done which we do ourselves.

VER. 319. *Resolve me, Reason, which of these is worse, Want with a full, or with an empty purse?*]
 The Poet did well in appealing to *Reason*, from the Parties concerned; who, it is likely, had made but a very foolish decision. The abhorrence of an empty purse would have certainly perverted the judgment of *Want with a full one*: And the longings for a full one would probably have as much misled *Want with an empty one*. Whereas Reason

Thy life more wretched, Cutler, was confes'd,
 Arise, and tell me, was thy death more bless'd?
 Cutler saw tenants break, and houses fall,
 For very want; he could not build a wall.
 His only daughter in a stranger's pow'r, 325
 For very want; he could not pay a dow'r.
 A few grey hairs his rev'rend temples crown'd,
 'Twas very want that sold them for two pound.
 What ev'n deny'd a cordial at his end,
 Banish'd the doctor, and expell'd the friend? 330
 What but a want, which you perhaps think mad,
 Yet numbers feel, the want of what he had!
 Cutler and Brutus, dying both exclaim,
 "Virtue! and Wealth! what are ye but a name!"

NOTES.

resolves this matter in a trice: there being a possibility that *Want with an empty purse* may be relieved; but none, that *Want with a full purse* ever can.

VER. 322.—Cutler—*Arise and tell me, &c.*] This is to be understood as a *solemn evocation* of the *Shade* of this illustrious Knight, in the manner of the Ancients; who used to call up their departed Heroes by the things they principally *loved* and *detested*, as the most potent of all charms. Hence this Sage is conjured by the powerful mention of a *full*, and of an *empty purse*. SCRIBL.

VER. 333. Cutler and Brutus, *dying both exclaim*,
 "Virtue! and wealth! what are ye but a name!"]
 There is a greater beauty in this comparison than the common reader is aware of. *Brutus* was, in *morals* at least, a *Stoic*, like his uncle. And how much addicted to that sect in general, appears from his professing himself of the old

Say, for such worth are other worlds prepar'd?
Or are they both, in this their own reward? 336

A knotty point! to which we now proceed.

But you are tir'd—I'll tell a tale—B. Agreed.

P. Where London's column, pointing at the skies
Like a tall bully, lifts the head, and lyes; 340

VARIATIONS.

VER. 337. in the former Editions,

That knotty point, my Lord, shall I discuss,
Or tell a tale?—A Tale.—It follows thus.

COMMENTARY.

VER. 339. *Where London's column, &c.*] For, the foregoing examples of *profusion* and *avarice* having been given to shew, that wealth misapplied, was *not enjoyed*; it only remained to prove that, in such circumstances, wealth became the *heaviest punishment*; and this was the very point

NOTES.

academy, and being a most passionate admirer of *Antiochus Ascalonites*, an essential *Stoic*, if ever there was any. Now *Stoical virtue* was, as our author truly tells us, not *exercise*, but *apathy*, *Contracted all, retiring to the breast*. In a word, like Sir J. Cutler's purse, nothing for use, but kept close shut, and centered all within himself.—Now *virtue* and *wealth*, thus circumstanced, are indeed no other than mere *names*.

VER. 339. *Where London's column,*] The Monument built in memory of the fire of London, with an inscription importing that city to have been burnt by the Papists.

P.

VER. 340. *Like a tall bully, lifts the head, and lies;*] It were to be wished, the *City-monument* had been compared to something of more dignity: As, to the *Court-champion*, for instance, since like him, it only spoke the sense of the Government.

SCRIBL.

There dwelt a Citizen of sober fame,
A plain good man, and Balaam was his name;

C O M M E N T A R Y.

to conclude with, as it is the great MORAL of this instructive Poem; which is to teach us, *how miserable men make themselves by not endeavouring to restrain the ruling Passion, tho' it be indeed implanted in us by the constitution of things*; while, at the same time, it is an answer to the latter part of the question,

“ Say, for such worth are other worlds prepar'd?

“ Or are they both, in this their own reward?

For the solution of which only, this Example was jocularly pretended to have been given.

All this, the Poet has admirably supported, in the artful construction of his fable of Sir Balaam; whose character is so drawn, as to let the reader see he had it in his power to regulate the *ruling Passion* by reason, as having in himself the seeds of integrity, religion, and sobriety. These are all gradually worked out by an insatiable *thirst of wealth*; and this again (thro' a false sense of his own abilities in acquiring it) succeeded by as immoderate a *vanity*: Which will lead us to another beauty in the management of the Story. For, in order to see, in one concluding Example, the miseries of exorbitant wealth, ill employed; it was necessary to set before the reader, at once, all the misuse, that flowed both from *avarice* and *profusion*. The vices of the CITIZEN and the NOBLE, therefore, which were separated, and contrasted in the foregoing instances, are here shewn incorporated in a *Courtly Cit*. Perhaps it will be said, that the character has, by this means, the appearance of *two ruling passions*: but those studied in human nature know the contrary: and that *alieni appetens, sui profusus*, is frequently as much one as either the profuse or avaricious apart. Indeed, this is so far from an inaccuracy, that it produces a new beauty. The *Ruling Passion* is of two kinds, the simple and the complex. The

Religious, punctual, frugal, and so forth;
 His word would pass for more than he was worth.
 One solid dish his week-day meal affords, 345
 An added pudding solemniz'd the Lord's:
 Constant at Church, and Change; his gains were sure,
 His givings rare, save farthings to the poor.

The Dev'l was piqu'd such faintship to behold,
 And long'd to tempt him like good Job of old, 350
 But Satan now is wiser than of yore,
 And tempts by making rich, not making poor.
 Rouz'd by the Prince of Air, the whirlwinds sweep
 The surge, and plunge his Father in the deep;
 Then full against his Cornish lands they roar, 355
 And two rich ship-wrecks bless the lucky shore.

COMMENTARY.

first sort, the Poet had given examples of before. Nothing then remained to complete his philosophic plan, but concluding with the other. Let me only observe further, that the author, in this Tale, has artfully summed up and recapitulated those three principal mischiefs in the *abuse* of money, which the *satirical* part of this Poem

NOTES.

VER. 355. *Cornish*] The author has placed the scene of these shipwrecks in Cornwall, not only from their frequency on that coast, but from the inhumanity of the inhabitants to those to whom that misfortune arrives: When a ship happens to be stranded there, they have been known to bore holes in it, to prevent its getting off; to plunder,

Sir Balaam now, he lives like other folks,
 He takes his chirping pint, and cracks his jokes :
 “ Live like yourself,” was soon my Lady’s word;
 And lo! two puddings smoak’d upon the board. 360
 Asleep and naked as an Indian lay,
 An honest factor stole a Gem away :
 He pledg’d it to the knight ; the knight had wit,
 So kept the Di’mond, and the rogue was bit.
 Some scruple rose, but thus he eas’d his thought, 365
 “ I’ll now give six-pence where I gave a groat ;

COMMENTARY.

throughout was employed to expose, namely AVARICE,
 PROFUSION, and PUBLIC CORRUPTION.

“ Constant at Church and ’Change ; his gains were sure,
 “ His givings rare, save farthings to the poor.—

“ Leaves the dull Cits, and joins (to please the fair)
 “ The well-bred Cuckolds in St. James’s air—

“ In Britain’s Senate he a seat obtains,
 “ And one more Pensioner St. Stephen gains.—

NOTES.

and sometimes even to massacre the people: Nor has the
 Parliament of England been yet able wholly to suppress
 these barbarities. P.

VER. 360. *And lo! &c.*] The Poet had observed above,
 that when the luxuriously selfish had got more than they
 knew how to use, they would try to do *more than live*; in-
 stead of imparting the least pittance of it to those whom
 fortune had reduced to do *less*: The vanity of which chi-
 merical project he well exposed in these lines;

“ Where once I went to church, I’ll now go twice—
 “ And am so clear too of all other vice.”

The Tempter saw his time; the work he ply’d;
 Stocks and Subscriptions pour on ev’ry side, 370
 ’Till all the Dæmon makes his full descent
 In one abundant show’r of Cent per Cent,
 Sinks deep within him, and possesses whole,
 Then dubs Director, and secures his soul.

Behold Sir Balaam, now a man of spirit, 375
 Ascribes his gettings to his parts and merit,
 What late he call’d a Blessing, now was wit,
 And God’s good Providence, a lucky Hit.

NOTES.

“ What Riches give us let us then enquire.
 “ Meat, Fire, and Cloaths. What more? Meat, Cloaths,
 and Fire.

But here, in one who had not yet learnt the art of disguising the Poverty of Wealth by the Refinements of Luxury, he shews, with admirable humour, the ridicule of that project:

“ And lo! *two* Puddings smoak’d upon the board.

VER. 377. *What late he call’d a Blessing now was Wit, &c.*
 This is an admirable picture of human nature: In the entrance into life, all but coxcombs-born, are modest; and esteem the favours of their superiors as marks of their benevolence: But, if these favours happen to increase; then, instead of advancing in gratitude to our benefactors, we only improve in the good opinion of ourselves; and the constant returns of such favours make us consider them no longer as accommodations to our wants, or the

Things change their titles, as our manners turn:
 His Compting-house employ'd the Sunday-morn:
 Seldom at Church ('twas such a busy life) 381
 But duly sent his family and wife.

There (so the Dev'l ordain'd) one Christmas-tide
 My good old Lady catch'd a cold, and dy'd.

A Nymph of Quality admires our Knight; 385
 He marries, bows at Court, and grows polite:
 Leaves the dull Cits and joins (to please the fair)
 The well-bred cuckolds in St. James's air:
 First, for his Son a gay Commission buys,
 Who drinks, whores, fights, and in a duel dies: 390
 His daughter flaunts a Viscount's tawdry wife;
 She bears a Coronet and P—x for life.

NOTES.

hire of our service, but debts due to our merit: Yet, at the same time, to do justice to our common nature, we should observe, that this does not proceed so often from downright vice as is imagined, but frequently from mere infirmity; of which the reason is evident; for, having small knowledge, and yet an excessive opinion of ourselves, we estimate our merit by the passions and caprice of others; and this perhaps would not be so much amiss, were we not apt to take their favours for a declaration of their sense of our merits. How often, for instance, has it been seen, in the three learned Professions, that a Man, who, had he continued in his primeval meanness, would have circumscribed his knowledge within the modest limits of Socrates; yet, being *push'd up*, as the phrase is, has felt himself growing into a *Hooker*, a *Hales*, or a *Sydenham*; while, in the rapidity of his course, he imagined he saw,

In Britain's Senate he a feat obtains,
 And one more Pensioner St. Stephen gains.
 My Lady falls to play; so bad her chance, 365
 He must repair it; takes a bribe from France;
 The House impeach him; Coningsby harangues;
 The Court forsake him, and Sir Balaam hangs:
 Wife, son, and daughter, Satan! are thy own,
 His wealth, yet dearer, forfeit to the Crown: 400

IMITATIONS.

VER. 394. *And one more Pensioner St. Stephen gains.*
 ——— atque unum civem donare Sibyllæ. JUV.

NOTES.

at every new station, a new door of science opening to him, without so much as staying for a Flatterer to let him in:

—— Beatus enim jam
 Cum pulchris tunicis fumet nova consilia.

VER. 401. *The Devil and the King divide the Prize.*
 This is to be understood in a very sober and *decent* sense; as a Satire only on such Ministers of State which History informs us have been found, who aided the *Devil* in his *temptations*, in order to foment, if not to make, Plots for the sake of confiscations. So sure always, and just is our author's satire, even in those places where he seems most to have indulged himself only in an elegant badinage. But this Satire on the *abuse* of the general Laws of forfeiture for high treason, which Laws all well-policied communities have found necessary, is by no means to be understood as a reflexion on the Laws themselves; whose necessity, equity, and even lenity have been excellently

The Devil and the King divide the prize,
And sad Sir Balaam curses God and dies.

NOTES.

well vindicated in that very learned and elegant Discourse, intituled, *Some considerations on the Law of Forfeiture for high Treason. Third Edition, London 1748.*

VER. ult. — *curses God and dies.*] i. e. Fell under the temptations; alluding to the story of Job, referred to above.



MORAL ESSAYS.

EPISTLE IV.

TO

Richard Boyle, Earl of Burlington.

ARGUMENT.

Of the Use of RICHES.

The Vanity of Expence in People of Wealth and Quality. The abuse of the word Taste, ver. 13. That the first principle and foundation in this, as in every thing else, is Good Sense, ver. 40. The chief proof of it is to follow Nature, even in works of mere Luxury and Elegance. Instanced in Architecture and Gardening, where all must be adapted to the Genius and Use of the Place, and the Beauties not forced into it, but resulting from it, ver. 50. How men are disappointed in their most expensive undertakings, for want of this true Foundation, without which nothing can please long, if at all; and the best Examples and Rules will be but perverted into something burdensome or ridiculous, ver. 65. &c. to 92. A

description of the false Taste of Magnificence; the first grand Error of which is to imagine that Greatness consists in the Size and Dimension, instead of the Proportion and Harmony of the whole, ver. 97. and the second, either in joining together Parts incoherent, or too minutely resembling, or in the Repetition of the same too frequently, ver. 105, &c. A word or two of false Taste in Books, in Music, in Painting, even in Preaching and Prayer, and lastly in Entertainments, ver. 133, &c. Yet PROVIDENCE is justified in giving Wealth to be squandered in this manner, since it is dispersed to the Poor and laborious part of mankind, ver. 169. [recurring to what is laid down in the first book, Ep. ii. and in the Epistle preceding this, ver. 159, &c.] What are the proper Objects of Magnificence, and a proper field for the Expence of Great Men, ver. 177, &c. and finally the Great and Public Works which become a Prince, ver. 191, to the end.



Proceed great Days!

Dunciad.

E P I S T L E IV.

'TIS strange, the Miser should his Cares employ
 To gain those riches he can ne'er enjoy:
 Is it less strange, the Prodigal should waste
 His wealth, to purchase what he ne'er can taste?

COMMENTARY.

EPISTLE IV.] The extremes of *Avarice* and *Profusion* being treated of in the foregoing Epistle; this takes up one particular branch of the latter, the *Vanity of Expence* in people of wealth and condition; and is therefore a corollary to the preceding, just as the Epistle on the *Characters of Women* is to that of *the knowledge and characters of Men*. It is equally estimable for exactness of method with the rest. But the nature of the subject, which is less philosophical, makes it capable of being analysed in a much narrower compass.

VER. 1. 'Tis strange, &c.] The Poet's introduction (from ver. 1 to 39.) consists of a very curious remark, arising from his intimate knowledge of nature: together with an illustration of that remark, taken from his observations on life. It is this, That the Prodigal no more *enjoys* his profusion, than the Miser, his rapacity. It was generally thought that *Avarice* only kept, without enjoyment; but the Poet here first acquaints us with a circumstance in human life much more to be lamented, viz. that *Profusion* too can communicate, without it; whereas *Enjoyment* was thought to be as peculiarly the reward of the *beneficent* passions (of which this has the appearance) as *want of enjoyment* was the punishment of the *selfish*. The phænomenon observed is odd enough. But if we look more narrowly into this matter, we shall find, that prodigality,

Not for himself he sees, or hears, or eats; 5
 Artists must chuse his Pictures, Music, Meats:
 He buys for Topham, Drawings and Designs,
 For Pembroke, Statues, dirty Gods, and Coins;

COMMENTARY.

when in pursuit of *Taste*, is only a *mode of vanity*, and consequently as *selfish* a passion as even avarice itself; and it is of the ordonnance and constitution of all selfish passions, when growing to excess, to defeat their own end, which is *Self-enjoyment*. But besides the accurate philosophy of this observation, there is a fine morality contained in it; namely, that *ill-got* Wealth is not only as *unreasonably*, but as *uncomfortably* squandered, as it was raked together; which the Poet himself further insinuates in ver. 15.

“ What brought Sir Visto's *ill-got wealth* to waste ?

—He then illustrates the above observation by divers examples in every branch of *wrong Taste*; and to set their absurdities in the strongest light, he, in conclusion, contrasts them with several instances of the *true*, in the Nobleman to whom the Epistle is addressed. This disposition is productive of various beauties; for, by this means, the introduction becomes an epitome of the body of the Epistle; which, as we shall see, consists of general reflections on *Taste*, and particular examples of bad and good. And his friend's example concluding the introduction, leads the Poet gracefully into the subject itself; for the Lord, here celebrated for his good *Taste*, was now at hand to deliver the first and fundamental precept of it himself, which gives authority and dignity to all that follow.

NOTES.

VER. 7. *Topham*] A Gentleman famous for a judicious collection of Drawings. P.

VER. 8. *For Pembroke, Statues, dirty Gods, and Coins.*] The Author speaks here not as a philosopher, or divine,

Rare monkish Manuscripts for Hearne alone,
 And Books for Mead, and Butterflies for Sloane. 10
 Think we all these are for himself? no more
 Than his fine Wife, alas! or finer Whore.

For what has Virro painted, built, and planted?
 Only to shew, how many Tastes he wanted.
 What brought Sir Visto's ill got wealth to waste? 15
 Some Dæmon whisper'd, "Visto, have a Taste."
 Heav'n visits with a Taste the wealthy fool,
 And needs no Rod but Ripley with a Rule.

NOTES.

but as a Connoisseur and Antiquary only; consequently, the *dirty* attribute here assigned these Gods of old renown, is not in disparagement of their worth, but in high commendation of their genuine pretensions. SCRIBL.

VER. 10. *And Books for Mead, and Butterflies for Sloane.*] Two eminent Physicians; the one had an excellent Library, the other the finest collection in Europe of natural curiosities; both men of great learning and humanity. P.

VER. 12. *Than his fine Wife, alas! or finer Whore.*] By the Author's manner of putting together these two different Utensils of *false Magnificence*, it appears, that properly speaking, neither the *Wife* nor the *Whore* is the real object of *modern Taste*, but the *finery* only: And whoever wears it, whether the Wife or the Whore, it matters not; any further than that the *latter* is thought to deserve it best, as appears by her having most of it; and so indeed becomes, by accident, the more fashionable Thing of the two. SCRIBL.

VER. 17. *Heav'n visits with a Taste, the wealthy fool,*] The present rage of *Taste*, in this overflow of general luxury, may be very properly represented by a *desolating pe-silence*, alluded to in the word *visit*.

VER. 18. *Ripley*] This man was a carpenter, employed

See! sportive fate, to punish aukward pride,
 Bids Bubo build, and sends him such a Guide: 20
 A standing sermon, at each year's expence,
 That never Coxcomb reach'd Magnificence!

You show us Rome was glorious, not profuse,
 And pompous buildings once were things of Use.
 Yet shall (my Lord) your just, your noble rules 25
 Fill half the land with Imitating-Fools;

VARIATIONS.

After ver. 22. in the MS.

Must Bishops, Lawyers, Statesmen have the skill,
 To build, to plant, judge paintings, what you will?
 Then why not Kent as well our treaties draw,
 Bridgman explain the Gospel, Gibbs the Law?

NOTES.

by a first Minister, who raised him to an Architect, without any genius in the art; and after some wretched proofs of his insufficiency in public Buildings, made him Comptroller of the Board of works. P.

VER. 19. *See! sportive fate, to punish aukward pride,*] Pride is one of the greatest mischiefs, as well as highest absurdities of our nature; and therefore, as appears both from profane and sacred History, has ever been the more peculiar object of divine vengeance. But *aukward Pride* intimates such abilities in its owner, as eases us of the apprehension of much mischief from it; so that the Poet supposes such a one secure from the serious resentment of Heaven, though it may permit *fate* or *fortune* to bring him into the public contempt and ridicule; which his native badness of heart so well deserves.

VER. 23. The Earl of Burlington was then publishing the Designs of Inigo Jones, and the Antiquities of Rome by Palladio. P.

Who random drawings from your sheets shall take,
 And of one beauty many blunders make;
 Load some vain Church with old Theatric state,
 Turn Arcs of triumph to a Garden-gate; 30

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VER. 28. *And of one beauty many blunders make;*] Because the road to *Taste*, like that to Truth, is but one; and those to error and absurdity a thousand.

VER. 29. *Load some vain Church, with old Theatric state,*] In which there is a complication of absurdities, arising both from their different *natures* and *forms*: For the one being for *religious service*, and the other only for *civil amusement*, it is impossible that the profuse and lascivious ornaments of the latter should become the modesty and sanctity of the other. Nor will any examples of this vanity of dress in the sacred buildings of antiquity justify this imitation; for those ornaments might be very suitable to a Temple of Bacchus, or Venus, which would ill become the sobriety and purity of the present Religion.

Besides, it should be considered, that the usual form of a Theatre would only permit the architectonic ornaments to be placed on the outward face; whereas those of a *Church* may be as commodiously, and are more properly put within; particularly in great and close pent-up Cities, where the incessant driving of the smoke, in a little time corrodes and destroys all outward ornaments of this kind; especially if the members, as is the common taste, be small and little.

Our Gothic ancestors had juster and manlier notions than these modern mimics of Greek and Roman magnificence: which, because the thing does honour to their genius, I shall endeavour to explain. All our ancient churches are called, without distinction, *Gothic*; but erroneously. They are of two sorts; the one built in the *Saxon* times; the other during our Norman race of kings. Several *Cathedral* and *Collegiate* Churches of the first sort are yet remain-

Reverse your Ornaments, and hang them all
On some patch'd dog-hole ek'd with ends of wall;

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ing, either in whole or in part; of which this was the Original: When the Saxon kings became Christian, their piety (which was the piety of the times) consisted in building Churches at home, and performing pilgrimages to the Holy Land: and these spiritual Exercises assisted and supported one another. For the most venerable as well as most elegant models of religious edifices were then in Palestine. From these our Saxon Builders took the whole of their ideas, as may be seen by comparing the drawings which travellers have given us of the churches yet standing in that country, with the Saxon remains of what we find at home; and particularly in that sameness of style in the *later* religious edifices of the Knights Templars, (professedly built upon the model of the church of the holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem) with the *earlier* remains of our Saxon Edifices. Now the architecture of the Holy Land was Grecian, but greatly fallen from its ancient elegance. Our Saxon performance was indeed a bad copy of it; and as much inferior to the works of St Helene, as her's were to the Grecian models she had followed: Yet still the footsteps of ancient art appeared in the circular arches, the entire columns, the division of the entablature, into a sort of Architrave, Frize, and Corniche, and a solidity equally diffused over the whole mass. This, by way of distinction, I would call the SAXON Architecture.

But our Norman works had a very different original. When the *Goths* had conquered Spain, and the genial warmth of the climate, and the religion of the old inhabitants, had ripened their wits, and inflamed their mistaken piety (both kept in exercise by the neighbourhood of the Saracens, thro' emulation of their science and aversion to their superstition) they struck out a new species of Architecture unknown to Greece and Rome; upon original principles, and ideas much nobler than what had given

Then clap four slices of Pilaster on't,
That, lac'd with bits of rustic, makes a Front.

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birth even to classical magnificence. For this northern People having been accustomed, during the gloom of paganism, to worship the Deity in GROVES (a practice common to all nations) when their new Religion required covered edifices, they ingeniously projected to make them resemble *Groves*, as nearly as the distance of Architecture would permit; at once indulging their old prejudices, and providing for their present conveniencies, by a cool receptacle, in a sultry climate. And with what skill and success they executed the project by the assistance of Sarazen Architects, whose exotic style of building very luckily suited their purpose, appears from hence, That no attentive observer ever viewed a regular Avenue of well grown trees, intermixing their branches over head, but it presently put him in mind of the long Visto thro' a Gothic Cathedral; or ever entered one of the larger and more elegant Edifices of this kind, but it represented to his imagination an Avenue of trees. And this alone is what can be truly called the GOTHIC style of Building.

Under this idea, of so extraordinary a species of Architecture, all the irregular transgressions against art, all the monstrous offences against nature disappear; every thing has its reason, every thing is in order, and an harmonious Whole arises from the studious application of means, proper and proportioned to the end. For could the *Arches* be otherwise than *pointed* when the Workman was to imitate that curve which branches make by their intersection with one another? Or could the *Columns* be otherwise than split into distinct shafts, when they were to represent the Stems of a clump of Trees? On the same principle they formed the spreading ramification of the stone-work in the windows, and the stained glass in the interstices; the one being to represent the branches, and the other the leaves of an opening Grove; and both concurring to pre-

Shall call the winds thro' long arcades to roar, 35
Proud to catch hold at a Venetian door;

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serve that gloomy light, inspiring religious horror. Lastly, we see the reason of their studied aversion to *apparent* solidity in these stupendous masses, deemed so absurd by men accustomed to the *apparent* as well as *real* strength of Grecian Architecture. Had it been only a wanton exercise of the Artist's skill, to shew he could give real strength without the appearance of any, we might indeed admire his superior science, but we must needs condemn his ill judgment. But when one considers, that this surprizing lightness was necessary to complete the execution of his idea of a rural place of worship, one cannot sufficiently admire the ingenuity of the contrivance.

This too will account for the contrary qualities in what I call the *Saxon Architecture*. These artists copied, as has been said, from the churches in the Holy Land, which were built on the models of the Grecian Architecture; but corrupted by prevailing barbarism; and still further depraved by a religious idea. The first places of Christian worship were Sepulchres and subterraneous caverns, low and heavy from necessity. When Christianity became the Religion of the State, and sumptuous Temples began to be erected, they yet, in regard to the first pious ages, preserved the massive Style: made still more venerable by the *Church of the holy Sepulchre*; where, this Style was, on a double account, followed and aggravated.

Such then was GOTHIC ARCHITECTURE. And it would be no discredit to the warmest admirers of *Jones* and *Palladio* to acknowledge it has its merit. They must at least confess it had a nobler birth, tho' an humbler fortune, than the GREEK and ROMAN ARCHITECTURE.

VER. 30. *Turn Arcs of Triumph to a Garden-gate*;] This absurdity seems to have arisen from an injudicious imitation of what these Builders might have heard of, at the entrance of the antient Gardens of Rome: But they do

Conscious they act a true Palladian part,
And if they starve, they starve by rules of art.

Oft have you hinted to your brother Peer,
A certain truth, which many buy too dear: 40

COMMENTARY.

VER. 39. *Oft have you hinted to your brother Peer,
A certain truth,—]*

and in this artful manner begins the body of the Epistle.

I.

The first part of it (from ver. 38 to 99.) delivers rules for attaining to the MAGNIFICENT in just expence; which is the same in Building and Planting, that the SUBLIME is in Painting and Poetry; and, consequently, the qualities necessary for the attainment of both must be analogous.

1. The first and fundamental, he shews (from ver. 38 to 47.) to be SENSE;

“ *Good Sense*, which only is the gift of Heav’n;

“ And, tho’ no Science, fairly worth the seven.

And for that reason; not only as it is the foundation and parent of them all, and the constant regulator and director

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not consider, that those were *public Gardens*, given to the people by some great man after a triumph; to which, therefore, *Arcs* of this kind were very suitable ornaments.

VER. 36. *Proud to catch cold at a Venetian door;]* In the foregoing instances, the Poet exposes the absurd imitation of foreign and discordant *manners* in *public* buildings; here he turns to the still greater absurdity of taking their models from a discordant *climate*, in their *private*: which folly, he supposes, may be more easily redressed, as men will be sooner brought to feel for themselves than to see for the public.

Something there is more needful than Expence,
 And something previous ev'n to Taste—'tis Sense:
 Good Sense, which only is the gift of Heav'n,
 And tho' no Science, fairly worth the seven:
 A Light, which in yourself you must perceive; 45
 Jones and Le Nôtre have it not to give.

To build, to plant, whatever you intend,
 To rear the Column, or the Arch to bend,

COMMENTARY.

of their operations, or, as the Poet better expresses it,—*of every art the soul*; but likewise as it alone can, in case of need, very often supply the offices of every one of them.

VER. 47. *To build, to plant, &c.*] 2. The next quality, for dignity and use, is TASTE, and but the next: For, as the Poet truly observes, there is—*something previous ev'n to Taste—'tis Sense*; and this in the order of things: For *Sense* is a taste and true conception of *Nature*: and *Taste* is a sense or true conception of *beautiful Nature*; but we must first know the essences of things, before we can judge truly of their qualities: The business of *Taste*, therefore, in the pursuit of *magnificence*, is, as the Poet shews us (from ver. 46 to 65.) 1. (to ver. 51.) To catch or lay hold on *Nature*, where she appears most in her charms. 2. (to ver. 57.) To adorn her, when taken, as best suits her dignity and quality; that is, to dress her in the light and modest habit of a virgin, not load her with the gaudy ornaments of a Prostitute. This rule observed, will prevent a transgression in the following, which is, not to let all its beauties be seen at once, but in succession; for that advantage is inseparable from a graceful and well-dressed person. 3. (to

NOTES.

VER. 46. *Inigo Jones* the celebrated Architect, and Mr. *Le Nôtre*, the designer of the best Gardens of France. P,

To swell the Terras, or to sink the Grot;
 In all, let Nature never be forgot. 50
 But treat the Goddess like a modest fair,
 Nor over-dress, nor leave her wholly bare,
 Let not each beauty ev'ry where be spy'd,
 Where half the skill is decently to hide.

COMMENTARY.

ver. 65.) To take care that the ornaments be well directed to that part, which it is your purpose to adorn; and, as in dressing out a modest Fair (which is the Poet's own comparison) the colours are suited to her complexion; the stuff, to the proportion of her person; and the fashion, to her air and shape; so in ornamenting a villa, *the rise or fall of waters* should correspond to its acclivities or declivities; the *artificial hills or vales* to its cover or exposure; and the manner of *calling in the country*, to the disposition of its aspect. But again, as in the illustration, whatever be the variety in colour, stuff, or fashion, they must still be so suited with respect to one another, as to produce an agreement and harmony in their assemblage: so woods, waters, mountains, vales, and vistas, must, amidst all their diversity, be so disposed with a relation to each other, as to create a perfect symmetry resulting from

NOTES.

VER. 53. *Let not each beauty ev'ry where be spy'd,*] For when the same beauty obtrudes itself upon you over and over; when it meets you full at whatever place you stop, or to whatever point you turn, then Nature loses her proper charms of a *modest fair*; and you begin to hate and nauseate her as a prostitute.

VER. 54. *Where half the skill is decently to hide.*] If the Poet was right in comparing the true dress of *Nature* to that of a *modest fair*, it is a plain consequence, that one half of the designer's art must be, *decently to hide*; as the other half is *gracefully to discover*.

He gains all points, who pleasingly confounds, 55
Surprizes, varies, and conceals the Bounds.

Consult the Genius of the Place in all;
That tells the Waters or to rise, or fall;

COMMENTARY.

the whole; and this, the *Genius* of the place, when religiously consulted, will never fail to inform us of; who, as the Poet says,

“ Now breaks, and now directs, th’ intending lines,

“ Paints as you plant, and, as you work, designs.

And this is a full and complete description of the *office of Taste*.

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VER. 57. *Consult the Genius of the Place, &c.—to designs, ver. 64.*] The personalizing or rather *deifying* the *Genius of the place*, in order to be consulted as an *Oracle*, has produced one of the noblest and most sublime descriptions of *Design*, that Poetry could express. Where this *Genius*, while presiding over the work, is represented by little and little, as advancing from a simple *adviser*, to a *creator* of all the beauties of improved Nature, in a variety of bold metaphors and allusions, all rising one above another, till they complete the unity of the general idea.

First the *Genius* of the place, *tells the waters*, or only simply gives directions: Then he *helps th’ ambitious bill*, or is a fellow labourer: Then again he *scoops the circling Theatre*, or works alone, or in chief. Afterwards, rising fast in our idea of dignity, he *calls in the country*, alluding to the orders of princes in their progress, when accustomed to display all their state and magnificence: His character then grows sacred, he *joins willing woods*, a metaphor taken from one of the offices of the priesthood; till at length, he becomes a Divinity, and creates and presides over the whole:

Or helps th' ambitious Hill the heav'ns to scale,
 Or scoops in circling theatres the Vale; 60
 Calls in the Country, catches op'ning glades,
 Joins willing woods, and varies shades from shades;
 Now breaks, or now directs, th' intending Lines;
 Paints as you plant, and, as you work, designs.

Still follow Sense, of ev'ry art the Soul, 65
 Parts answ'ring parts shall slide into a whole,

COMMENTARY.

VER. 65. *Still follow Sense, &c.*] But now when *Good Sense* has led us up to *Taste*, our fondness for the elegancies of our new mistress, oftentimes occasions us to neglect the plainness and simplicity of the old; we are but too apt to forsake our Guide, and to give ourselves up solely to *Taste*. Our author's next rule therefore, 3. is, *Still to follow Sense*, and let *Sense* perpetually accompany us thro' all the works of *Taste*.

“ Still follow Sense, of ev'ry art the Soul.

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“ Now breaks, or now directs th' intending lines,
 “ Paints as you plant, and, as you work, designs.

Much in the same manner as the *plastic Nature* is supposed to do, in the work of human generation.

VER. 65. *Still follow Sense, &c.*] The not observing this rule, bewilder'd a late noble writer (distinguished for his *philosophy of Taste*) in the pursuit of the Grand and *Magnificent* in *moral* life: who, when *Good Sense* had led him up to the τὸ καλὸν καὶ τὸ πρέπον of ancient renown, discharged his Guide; and, captivated with the delights of *Taste*, resolved all into the elegancies of that idea: And now, Reason, Morality, Religion, and the truth of things, were nothing else but *TASTE*; which (that he might not be thought altogether to have deserted his sage conductress) he sometimes dignified with the name of the *moral*

Spontaneous beauties all around advance,
Start ev'n from Difficulty, strike from Chance;

C O M M E N T A R Y.

That is, *good sense* should never be a moment absent from the works of *Taste*, any more than the soul from the body; for just as the soul animates and informs every air and feature of a beauteous body, so *sense* gives life and vigour to all the productions of *Taste*.

VER. 66. *Parts answ'ring parts, &c.*] The Poet then explains the particular advantages of the union of *sense* with *Taste*, (from this verse to 71.) 1. That the beautiful parts which *Taste* has laid out and contrived, *sense* makes to answer one another, and to *slide* naturally, without violence, *into a whole*. 2. That many beauties will *spontaneously* offer themselves, suggested from the very necessity which *sense* lays upon us, of conforming the parts to the whole, that no original invention of *Taste* would have supplied. 3. A third advantage is, that you are then always sure to have *Nature on your side*.

“ Nature shall join you —

The expression is important; when we are bid to *begin with sense*, we were shewn, how this would lead us to *Taste*, in the pursuit of *Nature*: but now, that he bids us to go on with *sense*, or *still to follow it*, after having arrived at

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sense: And he succeeded in the pursuit of Truth, accordingly.

VER. 66. *Parts answ'ring parts, shall slide into a whole,*] *i. e.* shall not be forced, but go of themselves; as if both the parts and whole were not of yours, but of *Nature's* making. The metaphor is taken from a piece of mechanism finished by some great master, where all the parts are so previously fitted, as to be easily put together by any ordinary workman: and each part slides into its place, as it were thro' a groove ready made for that purpose.

Nature shall join you ; Time shall make it grow
A Work to wonder at—perhaps a Stow. 70

Without it, proud Versailles ! thy glory falls ;
And Nero's Terraces desert their walls :

COMMENTARY.

Taste, he tells us, that *Nature* will then join us of her own accord : This has a great beauty, which arises from the philosophic truth of the observation. For, as we observed before,—*sense* being a right conception of *Nature* ; and *Taste* a right conception of *beautiful Nature* ; when these are in conjunction, *Nature* can stand out no longer, but presents herself to you without further pains or search.

VER. 71. *Without it, proud Versailles, &c.*] To illustrate this doctrine, the Poet next shews us (from ver. 70 to 99.) that without this continued support of *good sense*, things even of the *highest Taste* and *utmost Magnificence*, such as the Buildings of *Versailles*, the Gardens of *Villario*, and the Groves of *Sabinus* (which are the instances he gives) all, in a very little time, come to nothing ; and no wonder : for the exercise of *Taste* WITHOUT SENSE is, where something that is *not beautiful Nature* is mistaken for it ; and *ornamented* as beautiful *Nature* should be ; these ornaments, therefore, being destitute of all real support, must be continually subject to change. Sometimes the owner himself will grow weary of them (as in the case of *Villa-*

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VER. 70. The seat and gardens of the Lord Viscount Cobham in Buckinghamshire. P.

VER. 72. *And Nero's Terraces desert their walls :*] The expression is very significant. Had the *walls* been said to *desert the terraces*, this would have given us the image of a destruction, effected by *time* only ; which had been foreign to the Poet's intention ; who is here speaking of the punishment of *unsupported Taste*, in the designed subversion of it, either by *good* or *bad*, as it happens : one of which

The vast Parterres a thousand hands shall make,
 Lo! COBHAM comes, and floats them with a Lake:
 Or cut wide views thro' Mountains to the Plain, 75
 You'll wish your hill or shelter'd seat again.

COMMENTARY.

rio) and find at last, that *Nature* is to be preferred before them,

“ Tir'd of the scene *Parterres* and *Fountains* yield,

“ He finds at last, he better likes a *Field*.

Sometimes, again, the Heir (like *Sabinus's*) will be changing a bad Taste for a worse,

“ One *boundless green*, or *flourish'd carpet* views,

“ With all the *mournful family* of *Yews*.

So that *mere Taste* standing exposed between the *true* and *false*, like the decent man, between the rigidly virtuous, and thoroughly profligate, hated and despised by both, can never long support itself: and with this, the *first part* of the Epistle concludes.

NOTES.

is sure to do its business, and that soon; therefore it is with great propriety, he says, that the *Terraces desert their walls*, which implies purpose and violence in their subversion.

VER. 74. *Lo! COBHAM comes, and floats them with a Lake:*] An high compliment to the noble person on whom it is bestowed, as making him the *substitute of good Sense*.—This office, in the original plan of the Poem was given to another Man of TASTE; who not having the SENSE to see that a compliment was intended him, it convinced the Poet that it did not belong to him.

VER. 75, 76. *Or cut wide views thro' Mountains to the Plain, You'll wish your hill or shelter'd seat again.*] This was done in Hertfordshire, by a wealthy citizen, at

Ev'n in an ornament its place remark,
Nor in an Hermitage set Dr. Clarke.

Behold Villario's ten-years toil compleat;
His Quincunx darkens, his Espaliers meet; 80
The Wood supports the Plain, the parts unite,
And strength of Shade contends with strength of
Light;

NOTES.

the expence of above 5000l. by which means (merely to overlook a dead plain) he let in the north-wind upon his house and parterre, which were before adorned and defended by beautiful woods. P.

VER. 78.—*set Dr. Clarke.*] Dr. S. Clarke's busto placed by the Queen in the Hermitage, while the Dr. duly frequented the Court. P. But he should have added—with the innocence and disinterestedness of an Hermit.

VER. 81, 82. *The Wood supports the Plain, the parts unite,
And strength of Shade, contends with strength
of Light;*]

The imagery is here taken from *Painting* in the judicious execution of the *Pencil*, and in the happy improvement of it by *time*. To understand what is meant by *supporting* (which is a term of art common both to *Planting* and *Painting*) we must consider what things make the natural defect or weakness of a rude uncultivated *Plain*; and these are, the having a disagreeable *flatness*, and the not having a *proper termination*. But a *Wood*, rightly disposed, takes away the one, and gives what is wanting of the other.

“ —The parts unite.

The utmost which art can do, when it does its full office, is to give the work a *consent* of parts; but it is *time* only that can make the *union* here spoken of. So in painting, the skill of the Master can go no further, in the chromatic part, than to set those colours together, which have a na-

A waving Glow the bloomy beds display,
 Blushing in bright diversities of day,
 With silver quiv'ring rills mæander'd o'er— 85
 Enjoy them, you! Villario, can no more;
 Tir'd of the scene Parterres and Fountains yield,
 He finds at last, he better likes a Field.

Thro' his young Woods how pleas'd Sabinus stray'd,
 Or sat delighted in the thick'ning shade, 90
 With annual joy the red'ning shoots to greet,
 Or see the stretching branches long to meet!

NOTES.

tural friendship and sympathy for each other: But nothing but *time* can unite and incorporate their tints:

“And strength of Shade contends with strength of Light.

And now the work becomes a very picture; which the Poet informs us of, in the sublime way of poetical instruction, by setting that picture before our eyes; and not merely a picture, but a *perfect* picture, in which the lights and shades, not only bear a *proportion* to one another in their force (which is implied in the word *contends*) but are both at their *height* (which the word *strength* signifies.) As the use of the singular number, in the terms *Shade* and *Light*, alludes to another precept of the art; that not only the shades and lights should be great and broad, but that the masses of the clair-obscuré, in a group of objects, should be so managed, by a subordination of the groupes to the unity of design, as that the whole together may afford one great *shade* and *light*.

VER. 84. *Blushing in bright diversities of day,*] *i. e.* The several colours of the grove in bloom, give several different tints to the lights and shades.

His Son's fine Taste an op'ner Vista loves,
 Foe to the Dryads of his Father's groves;
 One boundless Green, or flourish'd Carpet views, 95
 With all the mournful family of Yews;
 The thriving plants, ignoble broomsticks made,
 Now sweep those Alleys they were born to shade.

At Timon's Villa let us pass a day,
 Where all cry out, "What sums are thrown away!"

COMMENTARY.

VER. 99. *At Timon's Villa, &c.*] As the first part ended with exposing the works of *Taste without sense*, the second begins with a description (from ver. 98 to 173.) of *false*

NOTES.

VER. 94. *Foe to the Dryads of his Father's groves;*] Finely intimating, by this sublime classical image, that the Father's taste was *enthusiastical*; in which passion there is always something great and noble; tho' it be too apt, in its flights, to leave *sense* behind it: and this was the good man's case. But his Son's was a poor despicable *superstition*, a low sombrous passion, whose perversity of Taste could only gratify itself,

"With all the mournful family of Yews."

VER. 95. The two extremes in parterres, which are equally faulty; a *boundless Green*, large and naked as a field, or a *flourish'd Carpet*, where the greatness and nobleness of the piece is lessened by being divided into too many parts, with scroll'd works and beds, of which the examples are frequent. P.

VER. 96.—*mournful family of Yews;*] Touches upon the ill taste of those who are so fond of Ever-greens (particularly Yews, which are the most tonfile) as to destroy the nobler Forest-trees, to make way for such little ornaments as Pyramids of dark-green continually repeated, not unlike a Funeral procession. P.

VER. 99. *At Timon's Villa*] This description is intend-

So proud, so grand; of that stupendous air, 101
Soft and Agreeable come never there.

Greatness, with Timon, dwells in such a draught
As brings all Brobdignag before your thought.

To compass this, his building is a Town, 105
His pond an Ocean, his parterre a Down:

Who but must laugh, the Master when he sees,
A puny insect, shiv'ring at a breeze!

COMMENTARY.

magnificence WITHOUT EITHER SENSE OR TASTE, in the gardens, buildings, table furniture, library, and way of living of Lord *Timon*; who, in none of these, could distinguish between greatness and vastness; between regularity and form; between dignity and state; or between learning and pedantry. But what then? says the Poet, resuming here the great principle of his Philosophy (which these moral Epistles were written to illustrate, and consequently on which they are all regulated) tho'

“Heav'n visits with a Taste the wealthy Fool,

“And needs no Rod—

yet the punishment is confined as it ought; and the evil is turned to the benefit of others: For

—“hence the Poor are cloath'd, the Hungry fed;

“Health to himself, and to his Infants bread,

“The Lab'rer bears; what his *hard heart* denies,

“His *charitable vanity* supplies.

NOTES.

ed to comprize the principles of a false Taste of Magnificence, and to exemplify what was said before, that nothing but Good Sense can attain it. P.

VER. 104.—*all Brobdignag*] A region of giants, in the satires of *Gulliver*.

Lo, what huge heaps of littleness around!
 The whole, a labour'd Quarry above ground, 110
 Two Cupids squirt before: a Lake behind
 Improves the keenness of the Northern wind.
 His Gardens next your admiration call,
 On ev'ry side you look, behold the Wall;
 No pleasing Intricacies intervene, 115
 No artful wildness to perplex the scene;
 Grove nods at grove, each Alley has a brother,
 And half the platform just reflects the other.
 The suff'ring eye inverted Nature sees,
 Trees cut to Statues, Statues thick as trees; 120

NOTES.

VER. 109. *Lo, what huge heaps of littleness around!*] *Grandeur* in building, as in the human frame, does not take its denomination from the body, but the soul of the work; when the soul therefore is lost or incumbered in its envelope, the unanimated parts, how *huge* soever, are not members of *grandeur*, but mere *heaps of littleness*.

VER. 117, 118. *Grove nods at grove, each Alley has a brother, And half the platform just reflects the other.*]

This is exactly the *two puddings* of the citizen, in the foregoing fable, only served up a little more magnificently: But both on the same absurd principle of wrong taste, viz. that one can never have too much of a good thing.

Ibid. *Grove nods at grove, &c.*] The exquisite humour of this expression arises solely from its significancy. These *groves*, that have no meaning, but very near relationship, can express themselves only like twin-ideots by *nods*;

— nutant ad mutua Palmæ
 Fœdera —

With here a Fountain, never to be play'd ;
 And there a Summer-house, that knows no shade ;
 Here Amphitrite sails thro' myrtle bow'rs ;
 There Gladiators fight, or die in flow'rs ;
 Unwater'd see the drooping sea-horse mourn, 125
 And swallows roost in Nilus' dusty Urn.

My Lord advances with majestic mien,
 Smit with the mighty pleasure, to be seen :
 But soft—by regular approach—not yet—
 First thro' the length of yon hot Terrace sweat ; 130
 And when up ten deep slopes you've drag'd your thighs,
 Just at his Study-door he'll blefs your eyes.

His Study! with what Authors is it stor'd ?
 In Books, not Authors, curious is my Lord ;

NOTES.

as the Poet says, which just serves to let us understand, that they know one another, as having been nursed, and brought up by one common parent.

VER. 124. The two Statues of the *Gladiator pugnans* and *Gladiator moriens*. P.

VER. 130. The *Approaches* and *Communication* of house with garden, or of one part with another, ill-judged, and inconvenient. P.

VER. 133. *His Study! &c.*] The false Taste in Books; a satire on the vanity in collecting them, more frequent in men of Fortune than the study to understand them. Many delight chiefly in the elegance of the print, or of the binding; some have carried it so far, as to cause the upper shelves to be filled with painted books of wood; others pique themselves so much upon books in a language

To all their dated backs he turns you round; 135

These Aldus printed, those Du Suëil has bound!

Lo some are Vellom, and the rest as good

For all his Lordship knows, but they are Wood.

For Locke or Milton 'tis in vain to look,

These shelves admit not any modern book. 140

And now the Chapel's silver bell you hear,

That summons you to all the Pride of Pray'r:

Light quirks of Music, broken and uneven,

Make the soul dance upon a Jig to Heav'n.

On painted Cielings you devoutly stare, 145

Where sprawl the Saints of Verrio or Laguerre,

NOTES.

they do not understand, as to exclude the most useful in one they do. P.

VER. 142. The false taste in *Music*, improper to the subjects, as of light airs in churches, often practised by the organist, &c. P.

VER. 142. *That summons you to all the Pride of Pray'r:*] This absurdity is very happily expressed; *Pride*, of all human follies, being the first we should leave behind us when we approach the sacred altar. But he who could take Meanness for Magnificence, might easily mistake Humility for Meanness.

VER. 145.—And in *Painting* (from which even Italy is not free) of naked figures in Churches, &c. which has obliged some Popes to put draperies on some of those of the best masters. P.

VER. 146. *Where sprawl the Saints of Verrio or Laguerre,*] This was not only said to deride the indecency and awkward position of the figures, but to insinuate the want of dignity in the subjects. Raphael's pagans, as the devils

On gilded clouds in fair expansion lie,
And bring all Paradise before your eye.

NOTES.

in Milton, act a nobler part than the Gods and *Saints* of ordinary poets and painters. The cartons at Hampton-Court are talked of by every body; they have been copied, engraved, and criticised; and yet so little studied or considered, that in the noblest of them, of which likewise, more has been said than of all the rest, we are as much strangers to St. Paul's audience in the Areopagus, as to those he preached before at Thessalonica or Berea.

The story from whence the painter took his subject is this,—“ St. Paul came to Athens, was encountered by
“ the Epicureans and Stoics, taken up by them to the
“ court of Areopagus, before which he made his apo-
“ logy; and amongst his converts at this time, were
“ Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Da-
“ maris.” On this simple plan he exercises his invention. Paul is placed on an eminence in the act of speaking. the audience round him in a circle; and a statue of Mars in the front of his temple, denotes the Scene of Action.

The first figure has been taken notice of for the force of its expression. We see all the marks of conviction, and resignation to the will of the divine Messenger. But I do not know, that it has been suspected, that a particular character was here represented. And yet the Platonic countenance, and the female attendant, shew plainly, that the painter designed DIONYSIUS, whom Ecclesiastical story makes of this sect; and to whom sacred history has given this companion. For the woman is DAMARIS, mentioned with him, in the *Acts*, as a joint convert. Either the Artist mistook his text, and supposed her converted with him at this audience; or, what is more likely, he purposely committed the indecorum of bringing a woman into the Areopagus, the better to mark out his *Dionysius*; a character of great fame in the Romish Church, from a mystic voluminous impostor, who has assumed his titles.

To rest, the Cushion and soft Dean invite,
Who never mentions Hell to ears polite. 150

NOTES.

Next to this PLATONIST of open visage and extended arms, is a figure deeply collected within himself, immersed in thought, and ruminating on what he hears. Conformable to his state, his arms are buried in his garment, and his chin reposing on his bosom; in a word, all his lineaments denote the STOIC; the symbol of which sect was, *Ne te quæsieris extra*. Adjoining to him is an old man with a squalid beard and habit, leaning on his crouch, and turning his eyes upwards on the Apostle; but with a countenance so sour and canine, that one cannot hesitate a moment in pronouncing him a CYNIC. The next that follows, by his elegance of dress, and placid air of railery and neglect, betrays the EPICUREAN: As the other which stands close by him, with his finger on his lips denoting *silence*, plainly marks out a follower of PYTHAGORAS. After these come a groupe of figures cavilling in all the rage of disputation, and criticising the divine Speaker. These plainly design the ACADEMICS, the genius of whose school was to debate *de quolibet ente*, and never come to a determination. Without the Circle, and behind the principal figures, are a number of young faces to represent the scholars and disciples of the several sects. These are all before the Apostle. Behind him are two other Figures: one regarding the Apostle's action, with his face turned upwards; in which the passions of malicious zeal and disappointed rage are so strongly marked, that we needed not the *red bonnet*, to see he was a Jewish Rabbi. The other is a pagan priest, full of anxiety for the danger of the established Worship.

Thus has this great Master, in order to heighten the dignity of his subject, brought in the heads of every sect of philosophy and religion which were most averse to the principles, and most opposed to the success of the Gospel; so that one may truly esteem this carton as the greatest effort of his divine genius.

But hark! the chiming clocks to dinner call;
 A hundred footsteps scrape the marble Hall:
 The rich Buffet well-coloured Serpents grace,
 And gaping Tritons spew to wash your face.

N O T E S.

VER. 146. *Verrio or Laguerre.*] Verrio (Antonio) painted many ceilings, &c. at Windsor, Hampton-Court, &c. and Laguerre at Blenheim-castle, and other Places. P.

VER. 150. *Who never mentions Hell to ears polite.*] This is a fact; a reverend Dean preaching at Court, threatened the sinner with punishment in "a place which he thought "it not decent to name in so polite an assembly." P.

VER. 153. Taxes the incongruity of *Ornaments* (tho' sometimes practised by the ancients) where an open mouth ejects the water into a fountain, or where the shocking images of serpents, &c. are introduced in Grotto's or Buffets. P.

VER. 153. *The rich Buffet well-coloured Serpents grace,*] The circumstance of being *well-colour'd* shews this ornament not only to be very absurd, but very odious too; and has a peculiar beauty, as, in one instance of false Taste, viz. *an injudicious choice in imitation*, he gives (in the epithet employed) the suggestion of another, which is an *injudicious manner of it*. For those disagreeable objects which, when *painted*, give pleasure; if coloured after nature, in *relief*, become shocking; as a toad, or a dead carcase in wax-work: yet these things are the delight of all people of bad Taste. However, the Ornament itself pretends to science, and would justify its use by antiquity; tho' it betrays the most miserable ignorance of it. The *Serpent*, amongst the ancients, was sacred, and full of venerable mysteries. Now things do not excite ideas so much according to their own natural impressions, as by fictitious ones, arising from foreign and accidental combinations; consequently the view of this animal raised in them nothing of that abhorrence which it is wont to do in us; but

Is this a dinner? this a Genial room? 155

No, 'tis a Temple, and a Hecatomb.

A solemn Sacrifice, perform'd in state,

You drink by measure, and to minutes eat,

NOTES.

on the contrary, very agreeable sensations, correspondent to those foreign associations. Hence, and more especially, because the Serpent was the peculiar *Symbol of health*, it became an extreme proper ornament to the *genial rooms* of the ancients. In the mean time, we who are strangers to all this superstition yet make ourselves liable to one much more absurd, which is idolizing the very fashions that arose from it. But if these pretenders to Taste can so widely mistake, it is no wonder that those who pretend to none, I mean the verbal Critics, should a little *hallucinate* in this matter. I remember, when the short Latin inscription on Shakespear's monument was first set up, and in the very style of elegant and simple antiquity, the News-papers were full of these small critics; in which the only observation that looked like learning, was founded in this ignorance of Taste and Antiquity. One of these Critics objected to the word *Mors* (in the inscription) because the Roman writers of the purest times scrupled to employ it; but, in its stead, used an improper, that is, a figurative word, or otherwise a circumlocution. But had he considered that it was their Superstition of *lucky* and *unlucky words* which occasioned this delicacy, he must have seen that a Christian writer, in a christian inscription, acted with great judgment in avoiding so senseless an affectation of, what he miscalls, classical expression.

VER. 155. *Is this a dinner? &c.*] The proud Festivals of some men are here set forth to ridicule, where pride destroys the ease, and formal regularity all the pleasurable enjoyment of the entertainment. P.

VER. 156.—*a Hecatomb.*] Alluding to the *hundred foot steps* before.

So quick retires each flying course, you'd swear
 Sancho's dread Doctor and his Wand were there. 160
 Between each Act the trembling salvers ring,
 From soup to sweet-wine, and God bless the King.
 In plenty starving, tantaliz'd in state,
 And complaisantly help'd to all I hate,
 Treated, caress'd, and tir'd, I take my leave, 165
 Sick of his civil Pride from Morn to Eve;
 I curse such lavish cost, and little skill,
 And swear no Day was ever past so ill.

Yet hence the Poor are cloath'd, the Hungry fed;
 Health to himself, and to his Infants bread 170
 The Lab'rer bears: What his hard Heart denies,
 His charitable Vanity supplies.

Another Age shall see the golden Ear
 Imbrown the Slope, and nod on the Parterre,

COMMENTARY.

VER. 173. *Another age, &c.*] But now a difficulty sticks with me (answers an objector) this load of evil still remains a monument of folly to future ages; an incum-

NOTES.

VER. 160. *Sancho's dread Doctor*] See Don Quixote, chap. xlvii. P.

VER. 169. *Yet hence the poor, &c.*] The Moral of the whole, where PROVIDENCE is justified in giving Wealth to those who squander it in this manner. A bad Taste employs more hands, and diffuses Expence more than a good one. This recurs to what is laid down in Book I. Ep. ii. ver. 230—7, and in the Epistle preceding this, ver. 161, &c. P.

VER. 173. *Another age, &c.*] Had the Poet lived but

Deep Harvests bury all his pride has plann'd, 175
And laughing Ceres re-assume the land.

COMMENTARY.

brance to the plain on which it stands; and a nuisance to the neighbourhood round about, filling it

“ — with imitating fools.

For men are apt to take the example next at hand; and aptest of all to take a bad one. No fear of that, replies the Poet, (from ver. 172 to 177.) Nothing absurd or wrong is exempt from the jurisdiction of Time; which is always sure to do full justice on it;

“ Another age shall see the golden Ear

“ Imbrown the Slope, and nod on the Parterre,

“ Deep Harvests bury all his pride has plann'd,

“ And laughing Ceres re-assume the land.

For the prerogative of

“ — Time shall make it grow,

is only due to the designs of *true Taste* joined to *use*: And

“ 'Tis *use* alone that *sanctifies* expence;

and nothing but the sanctity of *that* can arrest the justice of Time: And thus the second part concludes: which, consisting of an *example* of *false Taste* in every attempt to Magnificence, is full of concealed *precepts* for the *true*: As the first part, which contains *precepts* for *true Taste*, is full of *examples* of the *false*.

NOTES.

three years longer, he had seen his general prophecy against all ill-judged magnificence fulfilled in a very particular instance.

VER. 176. *And laughing Ceres re-assume the land.*] The great beauty of this line is an instance of the art peculiar to our Poet; by which he has so disposed a trite classical figure, as not only to make it do its vulgar office, of re-

Who then shall grace, or who improve the Soil?
 Who plants like BATHURST, or who builds like
 BOYLE.

'Tis Use alone that sanctifies Expence,
 And splendor borrows all her rays from Sense. 180

COMMENTARY.

III.

VER. 177. *Who then shall grace, &c.*] We come now to the third and last part (from ver. 176 to the end) and, as in the first, the Poet had given examples of wrong judged *Magnificence*, in things of *Taste*, *without Sense*; and, in the second, an example in others *without either Sense or Taste*; so the third presents two examples of *Magnificence* in *Planting and Building*; where *both Sense and Taste* highly prevail: The one in him, to whom this Epistle is addressed; and the other, in the truly noble person whose amiable character bore so conspicuous a part in the foregoing.

“Who then shall grace, or who improve the Soil?”

“Who plants like BATHURST, or who builds like BOYLE.”

Where, in the fine description he gives of these two species of *Magnificence*, he artfully insinuates, that tho', when executed in a *true Taste*, the great end and aim of both be the same, viz. the *general good*, in use or ornament; yet that their progress to this end is carried on in direct contrary

NOTES.

presenting a very *plentiful harvest*, but also to assume the personage of *Nature*, re-establishing herself in her rights, and mocking the vain efforts of magnificence, which would keep her out of them.

VER. 179, 180. *'Tis use alone that sanctifies Expence,*

And Splendor borrows all her rays from Sense.]

Here the Poet, to make the *examples* of good *Taste* the better understood, introduces them with a summary of his *Precepts*, in these two sublime lines; for, the consulting *Use* is

His Father's Acres who enjoys in peace,
 Or makes his Neighbours glad, if he encrease:
 Whose chearful Tenants bless their yearly toil;
 Yet to their Lord owe more than to the soil;
 Whose ample Lawns are not ashamed to feed 185
 The milky heifer and deserving steed;
 Whose rising Forests, not for pride or show,
 But future Buildings, future Navies, grow:
 Let his plantations stretch from down to down,
 First shade a Country, and then raise a Town. 190

You too proceed! make falling Arts your care,
 Erect new wonders, and the old repair;

COMMENTARY.

courses; that, in *Planting*, the private advantage of the neighbourhood is first promoted, till, by time, it rises up to a public benefit:

“ Whose ample Lawns are not ashamed to feed

“ The milky heifer and deserving steed;

“ Whose rising Forests, not for pride or show,

“ But future Buildings, future Navies grow.

On the contrary, the wonders of Architecture ought first to be bestowed on the public:

NOTES.

beginning with Sense; and the making *Splendor* or *Taste* borrow all its rays from thence, is going on with *Sense*, after she has led us up to *Taste*. The art of this disposition of the thought can never be sufficiently admired. But the Expression is equal to the Thought. This *sanctifying* of expence gives us the idea of something consecrated and set apart for sacred uses; and indeed, it is the idea under

Jones and Palladio to themselves restore,
 And be whate'er Vitruvius was before :
 Till Kings call forth th' Ideas of your mind, 195
 (Proud to accomplish what such hands design'd)
 Bid Harbors open, public Ways extend,
 Bid Temples, worthier of the God, ascend ;
 Bid the broad Arch the dang'rous Flood contain,
 The Mole projected break the roaring Main ; 200

COMMENTARY.

- “ Bid Harbors open, public Ways extend,
- “ Bid Temples, worthier of the God, ascend ;
- “ Bid the broad Arch the dang'rous flood contain ;
- “ The Mole projected break the roaring main.

And when the public has been properly accommodated and adorned, then, and not till then, the works of private *Magnificence* may take place. This was the order observed by those two great Empires, from whom we received all we have of this polite art: We do not read of any *Magnificence* in the private buildings of Greece or Rome, till the generosity of their public spirit had adorned the State with Temples, Emporiums, Council-houses, Common-porticos, Baths, and Theatres.

NOTES.

which it may be properly considered : for wealth employed according to the intention of Providence, is its true consecration ; and the real uses of humanity were certainly *first* in its intention.

VER. 195, 197, &c.] *Till Kings — Bid Harbors open, &c.*]
 The Poet, after having touched upon the proper objects of *Magnificence* and *Expence*, in the private works of great men, comes to those great and public works which become a prince. This Poem was published in the year 1732, when some of the new-built churches, by the act

Back to his bounds their subject sea command,
 And roll obedient Rivers thro' the Land :
 These Honours, Peace to happy Britain brings,
 These are Imperial Works, and worthy Kings.

NOTES.

of Queen Anne, were ready to fall, being founded in boggy land (which is satyrically alluded to in our author's imitation of Horace, Lib. ii. Sat. 2.

“ Shall half the new-built Churches round thee fall)
 others were vilely executed, thro' fraudulent cabals between undertakers, officers, &c. Dagenham-breach had done very great mischiefs ; many of the Highways throughout England were hardly passable ; and most of those which were repaired by Turnpikes were made jobs for private lucre, and infamously executed, even to the entrance of London itself. The proposal of building a Bridge at Westminster had been petitioned against and rejected ; but in two years after the publication of this poem, an Act for building a Bridge passed through both houses. After many debates in the committee, the execution was left to the carpenter above-mentioned, who would have made it a *wooden one* ; to which our author alludes in these lines,

“ Who builds a Bridge that never drove a pile?

“ Should Ripley venture, all the world would smile.

See the notes on that place.

P.

MORAL ESSAYS.

EPISTLE V.

To Mr. ADDISON.

Occasioned by his Dialogues on MEDALS.

SEE the wild Waste of all-devouring years!
How Rome her own sad Sepulchre appears,
With nodding arches, broken temples spread!
The very Tombs now vanish'd like their dead!

NOTES.

THIS was originally written in the year 1715, when Mr. Addison intended to publish his book of Medals; it was sometime before he was Secretary of State; but not published till Mr. Tickell's Edition of his works; at which time the verses on Mr. Craggs, which conclude the poem, were added, viz. in 1720. P.

EPIST. V.] As the third Epistle treated of the extremes of *Avarice* and *Profusion*; and the fourth took up one particular branch of the latter, namely, the *vanity of expence*

Imperial wonders rais'd on Nations spoil'd, 5
 Where mix'd with Slaves the groaning Martyr toil'd:
 Huge Theatres, that now unpeopled Woods,
 Now drain'd a distant country of her Floods:
 Fanes, which admiring Gods with pride survey,
 Statues of Men, scarce less alive than they! 10

NOTES.

in people of wealth and quality, and was therefore a corollary to the third; so this treats of one circumstance of that vanity, as it appears in the common collectors of old coins; and is, therefore, a corollary to the fourth.

VER. 6. *Where mix'd with Slaves the groaning Martyr toil'd:*] The inattentive reader might wonder how this circumstance came to find a place here. But let him compare it with ver. 13, 14. and he will see the Reason,

“ *Barbarian* blindness, *Christian* zeal conspire,

“ *And Papal* piety, and *Gothic* fire.

For the *Slaves* mentioned in the 6th line were of the same nation with the *Barbarians* in the 13th; and the *Christians* in the 13th, the Successors of the *Martyrs* in the 6th: Providence ordaining, that *these* should ruin what *those* were so injuriously employed in rearing: for the Poet never loseth sight of his great principle.

VER. 9. *Fanes which admiring Gods with pride survey,*] These Gods were then the Tyrants of Rome, to whom the Empire rais'd Temples. The epithet, *admiring*, conveys a strong ridicule; that passion, in the opinion of Philosophy, always conveying the ideas of ignorance and misery:

“ Nil admirari prope res est una, Numici,

“ Solaque quæ possit facere et servare beatum.

Admiration implying our ignorance of other things; *pride*, our ignorance of ourselves.

Some felt the silent stroke of mould'ring age,
 Some hostile fury, some religious rage.
 Barbarian blindness, Christian zeal conspire,
 And Papal piety, and Gothic fire.
 Perhaps by its own ruins sav'd from flame, 15
 Some bury'd marble half preserves a name;
 That Name the learn'd with fierce disputes pursue,
 And give to Titus old Vespasian's due,
 Ambition sigh'd: She found it vain to trust
 The faithless Column and the crumbling Bust: 20
 Huge moles, whose shadow stretch'd from shore to
 shore,
 Their ruins perish'd, and their place no more!
 Convinc'd, she now contracts her vast design,
 And all her Triumphs shrink into a Coin.
 A narrow orb each crouded conquest keeps, 25
 Beneath her Palm here sad Judæa weeps.
 Now scantier limits the proud Arch confine,
 And scarce are seen the prostrate Nile or Rhine;

N O T E S.

VER. 18. *And give to Titus old Vespasian's due.*] A fine insinuation of the entire want of Taste in Antiquaries; whose ignorance of characters misleads them (supported only by a name) against reason and history.

VER. 25. *A narrow Orb each crouded Conquest keeps,*] A ridicule on the pompous title of *Orbis Romanus*, which the Romans gave to their Empire.

VER. 72.—*the proud arch*] i. e. The triumphal Arch, which was generally an enormous mass of building.

A small Euphrates thro' the piece is roll'd,
And little Eagles wave their wings in gold. 30

The Medal, faithful to its charge of fame,
Thro' climes and ages bears each form and name:
In one short view subjected to our eye
Gods, Emp'rors, Heroes, Sages, Beauties, lie.
With sharpen'd sight pale Antiquaries pore, 35
Th' inscription value, but the rust adore.
This the blue varnish, that the green endears,
The sacred rust of twice ten hundred years!
To gain Pescennius one employs his Schemes,
One grasps a Cecrops in ecstatic dreams. 40
Poor Vadius, long with learned spleen devour'd,
Can taste no pleasure since his Shield was scour'd:
And Curio, restless by the Fair-one's side,
Sighs for an Otho, and neglects his bride.

Theirs is the Vanity, the Learning thine: 45
Touch'd by thy hand, again Rome's glories shine;

NOTES.

VER. 35. *With sharpen'd sight pale Antiquaries pore,*] *Microscopic glasses*, invented by philosophers to discover the beauties in the minuter works of nature, ridiculously applied by Antiquaries, to detect the cheats of counterfeit medals.

VER. 37. *This the blue varnish, that the green endears,*] i. e. This a collector of silver; That, of brass coins.

VER. 41. *Poor Vadius,*] See his history, and that of his Shield, in the *Memoirs of Scriblerus*.

Her Gods, and god-like Heroes rise to view,
 And all her faded garlands bloom a-new.
 Nor blush, these studies thy regard engage;
 These pleas'd the Fathers of poetic rage; 50
 The verse and sculpture bore an equal part,
 And Art reflected images to Art.

Oh when shall Britain, conscious of her claim,
 Stand emulous of Greek and Roman fame?

NOTES.

VER. 49. *Nor blush, these studies thy regard engage;*] A senseless affectation which some Authors of eminence have betrayed; who when fortune, or their talents have raised them to a condition to do without those arts, for which only they gained our esteem, have pretended to think letters below their character. This false shame, M. Voltaire has very well, and with proper indignation, exposed in his account of Mr. Congreve: "He had
 " one defect, which was, his entertaining too mean an
 " idea of his first profession (that of a writer) though
 " 'twas to this he owed his fame and fortune. He spoke
 " of his works as of trifles that were beneath him; and
 " hinted to me, in our first conversation, that I should
 " visit him upon no other foot than that of a gentle-
 " man, who led a life of plainness and simplicity. I
 " answered, that, had he been so unfortunate as to be a
 " mere gentleman, I should never have come to see
 " him; and I was very much disgusted at so unsea-
 " sonable a piece of vanity." *Letters concerning the Eng-
 lish Nation*, xix.

VER. 53. *Oh when shall Britain, &c.*] A compliment to one of Mr. Addison's papers in the Spectator, on this subject.

In living medals see her wars enroll'd, 55
 And vanquish'd realms supply recording gold?
 Here, rising bold, the Patriot's honest face;
 There Warriors frowning in historic bras:
 Then future ages with delight shall see
 How Plato's, Bacon's, Newton's looks agree; 60
 Or in fair series laurel'd Bards be shown,
 A Virgil there, and here an Addison.
 Then shall thy CRAGGS (and let me call him mine)
 On the cast ore, another Pollio, shine;
 With aspect open, shall erect his head, 65
 And round the orb in lasting notes be read,
 " Statesman, yet friend to Truth! of soul sincere,
 " In action faithful, and in honour clear;
 " Who broke no promise, serv'd no private end,
 " Who gain'd no title, and who lost no friend; 70

NOTES.

VER. 67. "*Statesman, yet friend to truth, &c.*] It should be remembered, that this poem was written to be printed before Mr. Addison's *Discourse on Medals*, in which there is the following censure of long legends upon coins: " The
 " first fault I find with a modern legend is its diffusiveness. You have sometimes the whole side of a medal
 " over-run with it. One would fancy the Author had a
 " design of being ciceronian—but it is not only the
 " tediousness of these inscriptions that I find fault with;
 " supposing them of a moderate length, why must they
 " be in verse? We should be surprized to see the title of
 " a serious book in rhyme."—*Dial.* iii.

“ Ennobled by himself, by all approv’d,
 “ And prais’d, unenvy’d, by the Muse he lov’d.”

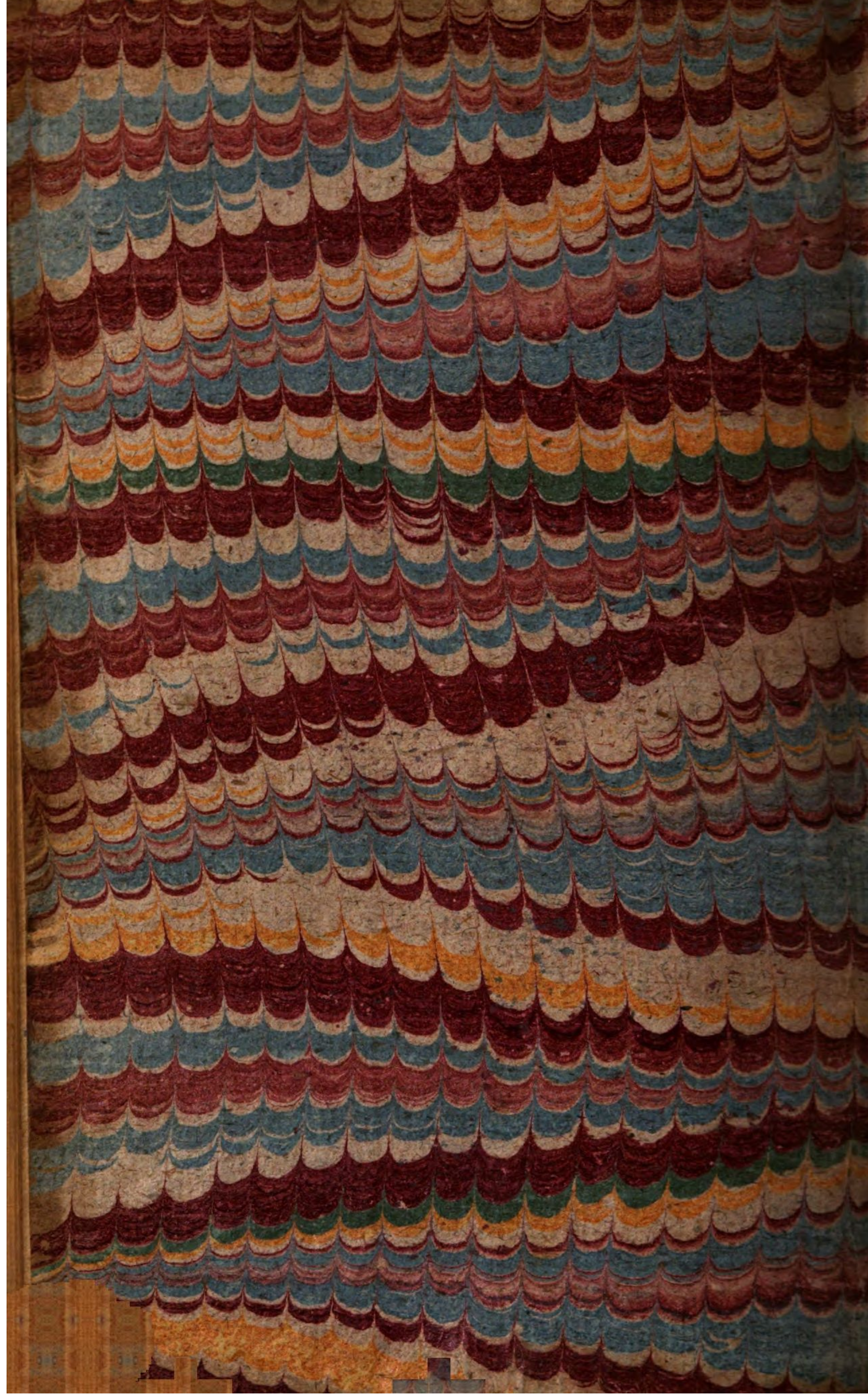
NOTES.

VER. ult. *And prais’d, unenvy’d, by the Muse he lov’d.*] It was not likely that men acting in so different spheres as were those of Mr. Craggs and Mr. Pope, should have their friendship disturbed by Envy. We must suppose then that some circumstances in the friendship of Mr. Pope and Mr. Addison are hinted at in this place.

END of the THIRD VOLUME.



7. D.^c







Pope, Alexander, 1688-1744

The Works of Alexander Pope

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